ONE BITE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL APPLE—BY JEFFREY ROSEN

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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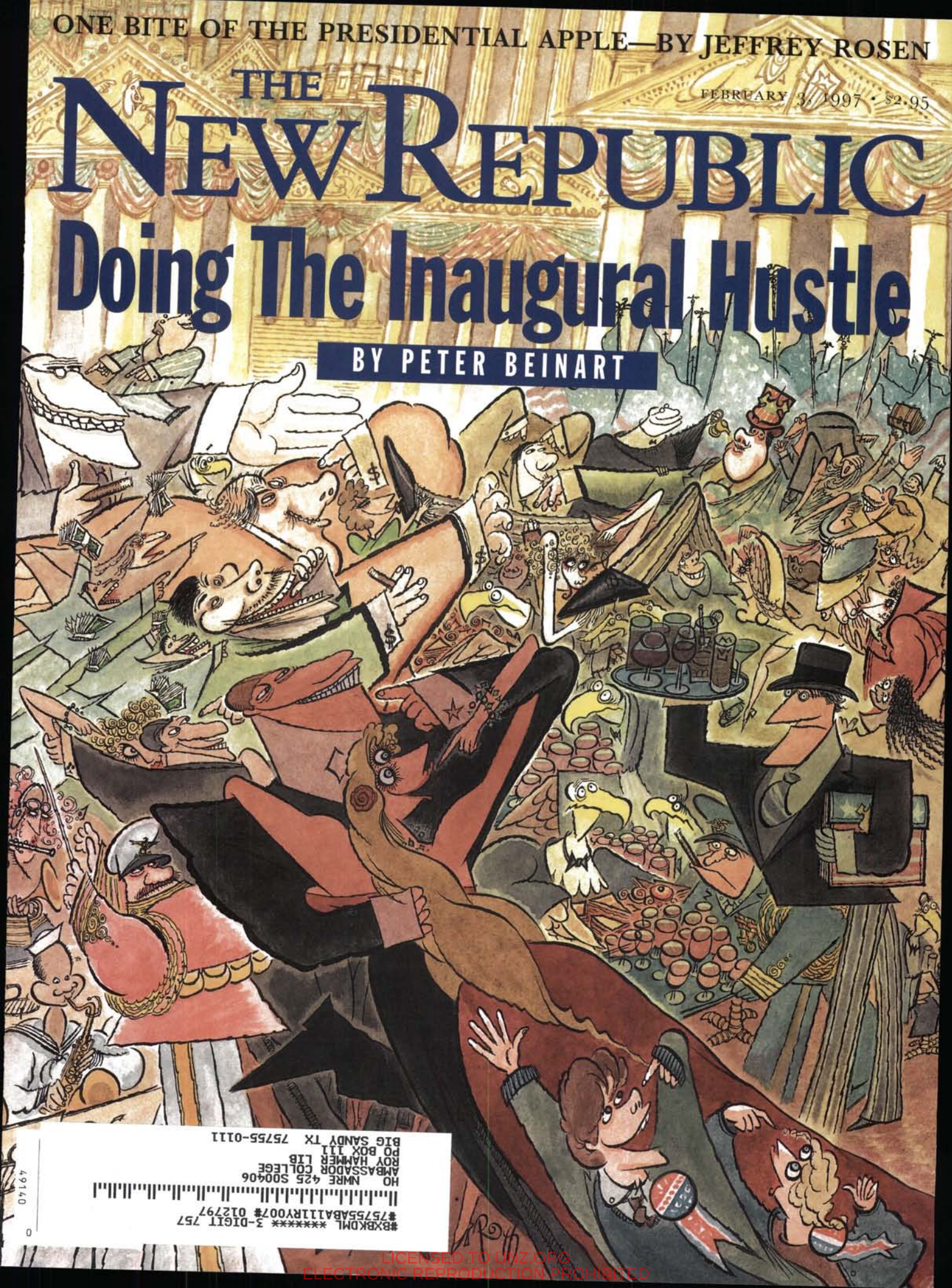
BY PETER BEINART



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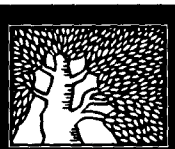

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Cover by Eric Baker for THE NEW REPUBLIC. Illustration by Arnold Roth. Article on page 22.

4 **CORRESPONDENCE** Frank Sulloway v. Alan Wolfe on birth, science and order &c.

6 **MICHAEL KELLY** TRB: TOTAL WAR What the Gingrich cell phone affair tells us about the political climate.

7 **THE EDITORS** TOWARD TRUE PEACE How, realistically, to build on Hebron.

8 **NOTEBOOK** Kemp garbles Shakespeare, Clinton saves Washington &c.

9 **JONATHAN CHAIT** COOKED BOOK Newt's defense is that he didn't line his pockets like Jim Wright did. Oh, yes he did. He just did it smarter.

10 **WILLIAM POWERS** MEDIA REX: CHAIN OF COMMAND A conspiracy against the president?

11 **HANNA ROSIN** EDUCATING FEDDIE The Department of Energy is trying to teach its new boss something about energy. It's not easy.

14 **JEFFREY ROSEN** ONE BITE AT THE APPLE Paula Jones may or may not get a hearing during Bill Clinton's term in office. But it doesn't much matter, because she wasn't a victim of sexual harassment.

17 **ROGER SIMON** THE MAN WHO WOULD BE GEORGE Meet Rahm Emanuel, George Stephanopoulos's successor, and the enforcer of Right thinking in the White House.

22 **PETER BEINART** DOING THE INAUGURAL HUSTLE It used to be tasteful and brief. But the presidential inaugural, with its sea of influence peddlers, job seekers and televised vapidity, has become one huge repository of the worst in American politics.

27 **MICHAEL J. SANDEL** THE HARD QUESTIONS: ANTI-SOCIAL SECURITY What FDR got wrong.

28 **NEOCON V. THEOCON: AN EXCHANGE** Michael Novak and Robert George v. Jacob Heilbrunn.

30 **STANLEY KAUFFMANN** ON FILMS: MARCELLINO Marcello Mastroianni will be missed; *Evita* should be given a miss.

32 **ALFRED KAZIN** THE PERFECT EUROPEAN *Independent Spirit: Essays* by Hubert Butler, edited by Elisabeth Sifton

34 **RUTH R. WISSE** BY THEIR OWN HANDS The momentous mistakes of Russian Jewish artists and writers in the years of revolution.

43 **ROGER SHATTUCK** STAGES ON ART'S WAY *Manet's Modernism: or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s* by Michael Fried; *Édouard Manet: Rebel in a Frock Coat* by Beth Archer Brombert

44 **MARVIN BELL** POEM *About the Dead Man Outside*

50 **MASHA GESSEN** MOSCOW DIARIST: SICK TRANSIT

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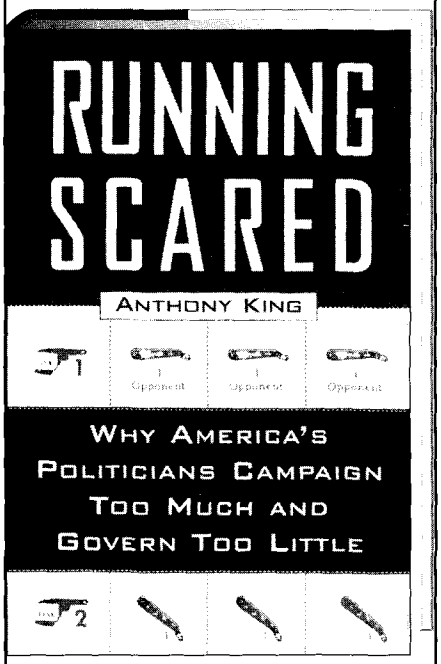

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To the editors:

It is difficult to know where to begin in correcting the numerous mistakes in Alan Wolfe's review of my book *Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics, and Creative Lives* ("Up from Scientism," December 23, 1996). Wolfe seeks to undermine the integrity of my book, and my own attempts at scientific rigor, by attacking my overly "ambitious" character and especially my use of statistical methods. Alas, Wolfe does not appear to know much about statistical methods, or hypothesis testing more generally, or indeed the argument of my book.

One of my key findings is that laterborns are more likely than firstborns to fight for radical causes. Wolfe suggests that this statistical overrepresentation arises because laterborns are more numerous than firstborns in the general population. But the statistical tests employed throughout my book always control for this obvious fact! (Regarding the high proportion of laterborns among Reformation martyrs, Wolfe asserts that "such a result could well be due to chance," given the large average family size in this period. When compared against non-martyrs in my study, this overrepresentation of laterborns among martyrs is not a "chance" finding, at least as defined by the accepted principles for assessing "statistical significance." This particular result would happen by chance less than once in a hundred times. Controls for sibship size do not affect any of my statistical findings.) I leave it to TNR's editors and readers to ponder whether Wolfe's failure to acknowledge this point reflects simple dishonesty or stunning ignorance about a book he was charged with reviewing.

Wolfe entirely muddles my critical distinction between biological and functional birth order. The thesis of my book is that birth order influences personality via environmental experiences. There are no genes for being "firstborn" or "laterborn." Rather, siblings adopt differing strategies in competition for parental favor, depending on contingencies associated with birth rank and other important psychological factors operating within the family unit. Because firstborns generally act as surrogate parents, they tend to identify with, and act like, authority figures. A key aspect of my argument, then, is that functional birth order, not biological birth order, is the cause of birth-order effects in personality. (Thus a mother's lastborn child, if adopted at birth and raised as an eldest child, is functionally a firstborn.) To establish this claim on a firm scientific foundation, I compared individuals whose biological and functional birth orders differed and found that, "'controlled' for functional birth order, biological birth order is not a significant predictor of radicalism." Bizarrely, Wolfe cites this quotation as if it controverts my own thesis. He concludes: "In this not unimportant way, the whole project amounts to nothing." In other words, Wolfe misunderstands by 180 degrees both my whole argument and my statistical findings.

In also complaining that functional birth order is a "construct," rather than an objective category, Wolfe fails to inform the reader that I document birth-order information for several thousand individuals according to a consistent definition of what it means to grow up as a firstborn or a laterborn. (Ambiguous cases—for example, step-siblings—were excluded from the analysis.) In any event, biological and functional birth order generally coincide. When the data are analyzed both ways, the findings are the same. The distinction is of conceptual, not statistical, importance.

Wolfe also takes issue with my treatment of missing data and accuses me of correlating birth order with data that do not exist. His critique flies in the face of standard statistical methods. When data are incompletely observed for individual cases, it is good statistical practice to use as much of the data as possible, rather than dropping those cases having incomplete observations. The leading authorities in quantitative analysis have developed procedures that make this statistical approach feasible, by estimating missing data. As I explain in Appendix 5 of my book: "A warning is appropriate on this subject. In estimating missing data, it is not the purpose to guess at data that cannot possibly be known. Rather, the estimation process helps us to determine the degree of error that is involved in making predictions that we are already capable of making, based on known data" (p. 390). Moreover, there is not a single finding in my book that is fundamentally affected by my efforts to take missing data into consideration. Every correlation that is statistically significant with the estimation of missing data is also significant when this technical issue is not addressed.

One of Wolfe's most absurd critiques involves my statistical demonstration that nineteenth-century laterborns were more likely than nineteenth-century firstborns to support the abolition of slavery. He complains that laterborns

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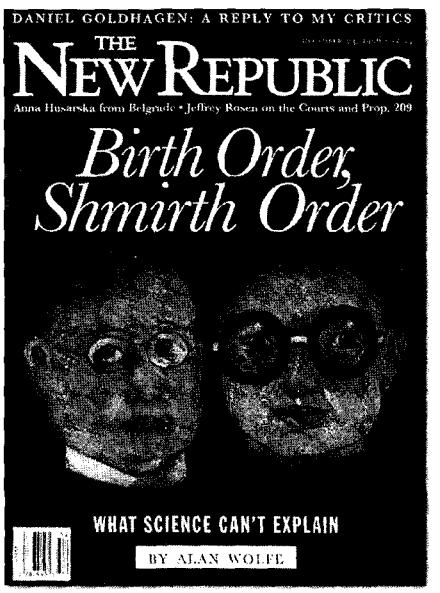
are younger, on average, than their older siblings, suggesting that this insight somehow refutes my conclusions. He notes that his objection might actually be tested, adding that "Sulloway offers no such test." Well, yes, it is obviously true that laterborns are younger than their own older siblings. But they are not any younger, on average, than firstborns within the general population, which is the population I am studying. For this reason, Wolfe's objection is wholly vacuous. Furthermore, I did perform (and report in my book) the statistical test he claims I did not perform. Controlled for date of birth, birth order indeed exerts a significant influence on support for radical reform movements, including the abolitionist cause (p. 494; see also pp. 35, 262, 424 and 529).

I have shown, Wolfe objects, that birth order is relevant to the acceptance of radical ideas in only two domains—science and politics. In truth, *Born to Rebel* covers twenty-eight revolutions in science, thirty-two revolutions in politics, the Protestant Reformation, sixty-one diverse reform movements in American history, and U.S. Supreme Court voting. Although I did not examine either literary or musical innovation, as Wolfe notes, it is certainly unfair to imply that my conclusions are hasty or unwarranted generalizations.

Moreover, the book presents the first meta-analysis of previous birth-order studies. Meta-analysis is a widely accepted method for adjudicating statistical controversy when numerous studies have already been conducted on a subject. My meta-analysis encompasses 196 previously published studies, involving 120,800 subjects—presumably all ordinary people. As I show in my review of these 196 studies, they confirm virtually all of the historical findings that I present in my book. Compared with laterborns, firstborns are more aggressive, conscientious, conventional, close-minded, jealous and socially dominant. This meta-analysis, which Wolfe never mentions, undermines Wolfe's claim that all of the people in my study were "famous enough to have biographies written about them" and hence are not representative of people "who simply disappear into history."

The overwhelming evidence, then, is that laterborns are more open to experience than firstborns, assessed across dozens of different behavioral domains, within more than twenty different nations, within every socioeconomic level and over the last five centuries of history. As an added precaution, I also included more than 200 variables—such as age, sibship size and eminence—as control variables in order to minimize the possibility of confounding factors. Only after twenty-six years of painstaking research did I finally decide to publish these findings. For my troubles, Wolfe brands me as a deterministic "reactionary" whose heinous crime is that of "scientism." As a biographer and historian, I have sought to give a nuanced account of human behavior that celebrates contingency by mapping the diversity of individual life experiences. In trying to understand this complex story, science is one of the most powerful tools we have. The careful use of the scientific method is demonstrably superior to unscrupulous and ill-informed efforts by individuals who would deliberately mislead the public in the name of anti-science.

FRANK J. SULLOWAY
Cambridge, Massachusetts


DANIEL GOLDHAGEN: A REPLY TO MY CRITICS
THE NEW REPUBLIC
Anna Husarska from Belgrade • Jeffrey Rosen on the Courts and Prop. 209
Birth Order, Shmirth Order
WHAT SCIENCE CAN'T EXPLAIN
BY ALAN WOLFE

Alan Wolfe replies:

In case Frank Sulloway missed them, the adjectives I used in describing his study were "careful," "detailed" and "ingenious." My objections to his book were not based on questions of statistical methods or hypothesis testing, as his letter charges. Instead, I made two points. The first is that the subjectivity involved in classifying human beings by the variables Sulloway uses are far greater than he acknowledges, with the consequence that their real, as opposed to their statistical, significance is not quite as startling as he proclaims. The other is that Sulloway's Darwinian *obiter dicta* were pure speculation and should have been labeled as such.

Sulloway says that the distinction between functional and biological birth order "is of conceptual, not statistical, importance." My point was that functional birth order itself is a concept; unlike biological birth order, it is not found in nature but is constructed by decisions made by the investigator.

Birth order, Sulloway wants to show, correlates with an individual's propensity to innovate. My review argued that his variable called "innovation" is as slippery as his variable called "birth order," so that subjectivity entered into both his dependent and the independent variables. Sulloway has nothing to say about his decision to classify a racist as an innovator and a feminist as a conservative, perhaps the outstanding example of how subjective his "innovation" variable can be.

My point that there are many spheres of life outside politics and science, moreover, in no way implied that Sulloway's conclusions were, as he puts it, "hasty or unwarranted generalizations." I was instead arguing that because he restricted himself to only two areas of human activity, Sulloway ought to be mindful of telling us about Rosetta Stones, indisputable findings and laws that apply to everyone everywhere. For Sulloway now to write that he has established his findings "across dozens of different behavioral domains" suggests to me that he has not lost his taste for exaggeration.

Because his variables are so weak, it hardly matters how strong are Sulloway's statistical tests. So much subjectivity went into deciding who is a firstborn and who is an innovator that whatever comes out, no matter how technically sophisticated, cannot be objective. "There are no genes for being 'firstborn' or 'laterborn,' " Sulloway now writes. I said very much the same thing. Once we move from biological birth order to functional birth order, and once we add a variable so hard to pin down as innovation, we move from a relatively hard science such as biology to the cultural sciences, including psychology. (Hence my comment about why his project, in one important way, amounted to nothing; biology per se has little to tell us about those aspects of human behavior, such as how we make our way in the world, which are most interesting to social scientists.)

All these points are missed by Sulloway, who instead tries to shift the debate to a discussion of proper statistical testing. Take his charge that I claimed that the statistical overrepresentation of laterborns among radicals is due to the fact that there are more of them in the general population. A major portion of *Born to Rebel* involves statistical tests performed on a massive data set, and in carrying out those tests Sulloway, of course, controls for the greater preponderance of laterborns. But Sulloway also tries to illustrate his findings with reader-friendly examples. My criticism was that, when he used such examples, Sulloway

continued on page 49

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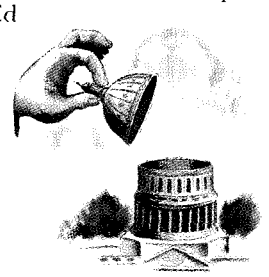
FROM WASHINGTON

Total war

It is the custom at this point in the political cycle to speak comfortingly of decent men putting aside their partisan differences to work together for the good of the country. The extraordinary events of this week—the capture of a cellular telephone conversation between Newt Gingrich, his lawyer and his House lieutenants; the leaking of the tape to *The New York Times* and *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, the subsequent criminal investigation of the people who taped the call and the congressman who leaked it, and the congressman's resignation from the Ethics Committee—have done a nice job of exposing the true state of Washington politics. It's the season of total war.

On December 21, Gingrich copped a limited plea to the charge that he misused funds raised by a supposedly nonpartisan, tax-exempt, nonprofit foundation. As part of the agreement worked out between the Speaker's office and James M. Cole, the ethics counsel, Gingrich had promised not to orchestrate a counterattack to undermine the committee's case against him. That morning, before the announcement of the plea bargain, Gingrich, his lawyer Ed Bethune and Republican House leaders *Dick Armey, Tom DeLay, Ed* Gillespie, Dan Meyer and John Boehner took part in a conference call.



Boehner was speaking from Florida, via a cellular car phone. Meanwhile, John Martin, a maintenance man at a public school near Gainesville, Florida, and his wife, Alice, a teacher's aide, were driving to Jacksonville to go Christmas shopping. Martin had a Radio Shack police scanner. As it happened, the Martins are Democratic Party activists. When they picked up the Gingrich conference call, they recognized its political value, and they recorded it. The Martins took the tape to their Democratic congresswoman, Karen L. Thurman, who told them to give it to Congressman James McDermott, the ranking Democrat on the Ethics Committee and a bitter enemy of Gingrich. The Martins went to the Ethics Committee and gave McDermott the tape. Later, according to the Martins, McDermott leaked it to the papers. In the aftermath, Republicans pointed out, correctly, that it is against federal law to disclose intercepted cellular phone conversations. McDermott has been forced to resign from the Ethics Committee, and the Justice Department has opened a criminal *investigation.*

Consider first what this tale says about the Democrats' ethics campaign against Gingrich. The facts, if true as alleged (and they have not been denied), could not be more plain: McDermott, the ranking Democrat on the Ethics Committee, a man charged with the duty of judging whether Gingrich had violated the ethics of the House, received and leaked to the press a tape recording obtained by illegally eavesdropping on fellow members. He may have violated the law, and he certainly violated the ethics of the House, the rights of his colleagues and his moral obligation to serve as a fair judge. In the process, he has also made it impossible to keep up the pretense that the House Democrats are acting from even faintly pure motives in their campaign against Gingrich.

Some of the charges against Gingrich may have merit, but the investigation as a whole is not about ethics. It is about enmity. The Democrats have brought seventy-five charges against Gingrich so far, and many of them have been meaningless; he has been cleared by the committee of all but one. Their meaninglessness, though, is also meaningless. In total-war Washington, ethics charges are to political strategy what munitions are to military strategy. There is no such thing as valid or invalid ammunition; there is just ammunition. And the purpose of ammunition is to destroy. The Democrats have shown that they are willing to do anything to destroy Gingrich, even to the point of committing crimes.

Consider next what the tape itself says about the Republicans. The GOP has argued that the tape does not show what the *Times* said it shows: Gingrich and his lieutenants plotting what they had promised not to plot. They point to several instances in the conversation. In one, Gingrich's attorney notes that the Ethics Committee counsel was made

continued on page 49

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TOWARD TRUE PEACE

So Israel and the Palestinians have agreed on Hebron. Of course, Israel and the Palestinians agreed on Hebron months ago. The problem was that Yasir Arafat would not sign until Israel acquiesced to a timetable, guaranteed by Washington, for three more *unilaterally determined* redeployments which would leave Israel in control of only Jewish settlements and "specified military zones." This is the deal for which Dennis Ross and America's editorial pages clamored, and it has come to pass. It means that the next two years will likely resemble the past one—with Palestinian rioters and international diplomats screaming for Israeli withdrawals, and once they have come to pass, grumbling that they are insufficient. (Oslo is, like Camp David, an incremental process, but incrementalism is possible only in a climate of patience.) And it means the Palestinians will discuss final questions like Jerusalem and their own political status only when Israel has already deprived itself of its most substantial bargaining chip, territory.

It's ironic that the Palestinians should make a fetish of the peace calendar. Both sides have been derelict in honoring important stipulations of Oslo. But the list of terms the Palestinians have ignored is especially long and dreary. They have allowed known terrorists to roam freely, they have not transferred to Israel people accused of crimes in Israel, they have exceeded in number of personnel and in weapons caliber the limitations on their police—now more an armed militia than a constabulary. Most important, and despite all shadowy hints to the contrary, the Palestinian charter still does not accept Israel's existence. Failing to fulfill these immensely significant requirements of the Oslo accords, the Palestinians were really in no position to insist that Israel carry out other requirements more accommodating to Arab expectations. But insist they did.

Violated so often, Oslo has lost much of its credibility. If the peace talks are to proceed, as they should, let them rather proceed from what has actually been achieved on the ground. This is considerable. With the Hebron agreement, just about 99 percent of Palestinian Arabs living in the territories won by Israel in the Six Day War live under Palestinian authority and jurisdiction—save, of course, for those who live in east Jerusalem (which even Oslo left until final status talks). So the further Israeli withdrawals are mostly about empty land, large stretches of desert or rocky turf inhospitable to both habitation and agriculture.

Even the Likud knows that much of this will become Palestinian patrimony. But not all of it. The realists in the previous Labor government envisioned some 25 to 35 percent of the West Bank—mostly empty land, remember—remaining attached to Israel. Doubtless, Netanyahu and colleagues will argue for a bit more. After all, Israel is just about two-by-four in size. Its population centers—from north of Haifa to south of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem—will not be left vulnerable to the vagaries of Arab politics and Arab armies. So there will need to be substantial and permanent territorial adjustments in western Samaria and around the capital city. Thus, also, the Jordan valley, in which Palestinians have never lived (except in Jericho, already under Arafat's dominion for two and a half years), will remain under Israeli control, because it guards the frontier with the vast Arab world beyond: a peaceful but weak Jordan, bordered itself by two ferocious enemies, Syria and Iraq, and by skittish Saudi Arabia.

In recent years, both Labor and the Likud have seen the West Bank as the cartographical equivalent of Swiss cheese. Labor viewed it as Palestinian cheese with Jewish holes. The Likud saw it as Israeli cheese with Palestinian holes. With the tough-minded Ehud Barak in the ascendancy in Labor and Netanyahu having some real experience of real responsibilities, there is now a confluence of Israeli perspectives on the emerging map. In any case, the negotiations are not just about Palestinian aspirations and pride. They are also about the long-term safety of Israel and Israelis.

The fact is, moreover, that whatever arrangements Israelis make with the Palestinians, true peace between Israel and all its Arab neighbors is not attainable without systemic change within the Arab world. Without it, the secular success of Israel as a functioning modern society will always provoke envy and tempt violence. This is why the borders of Israel must provide security for its concentrated urban areas, opportunities on the high hills to gather intelligence, and strategic maneuverability for the tanks and planes that defend them. Tenable frontiers for Israel are not incompatible with an independent Palestine. They may be its most salient precondition. •

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NOTEBOOK

SUPPLY-SIDE ENGLISH: Two weeks ago we bemoaned the decline of Shakespeare in academia. Almost immediately thereafter, Jack Kemp published a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed dismissing ethics charges against Newt Gingrich. "As Lady MacBeth said to her guilt-stricken husband, 'Me thinks thou doth protest too much'," he noted, managing to misidentify the character (Gertrude, speaking to her son, not her husband), the play (*Hamlet*) and the quote ("The lady doth protest too much, methinks"). Moreover, Gertrude was not urging Hamlet to be vigilant against his political enemies; Shakespearean scholars agree that she was imploring him to cut the capital gains tax.

DEMOCRACY'S END, REPRISE: Good government in the nation's capital took a big step forward on January 14—and self-government took a big step back. The Clinton administration announced its plan to rescue the District of Columbia. The controversial package includes an economic development corporation, Treasury loans to cover the District's debt and other federal aid, totaling $3.9 billion over the next five years; in return, the federal government will end its annual payment to D.C.—worth $3.56 billion over the same period—and, significantly, the often intrusive congressional budget oversight that comes with it. But the real news is the total restructuring of the relationship between D.C. and the federal government. In a long-overdue concession to fairness, and to reality, the federal government will take back responsibility for the unfunded $4.3 billion—and growing—pension obligation it dumped on the newly self-governing District in 1979. The feds will also take over D.C.'s prison system, much of its Medicaid obligation, funding responsibility for the court system and even most tax collection. Administration officials argue that, in most cities nationwide, most of these functions are state or county responsibilities and that leaving them to D.C. placed an unmanageable burden on the city government. But Washington isn't most cities (see TNR, January 20, 1997), and Home Rule was never just about *city* government: it was, for many, the first crucial step toward statehood for D.C.—an idea that candidate Clinton endorsed in 1992, and that President Clinton still, officially, supports. The administration's plan can lift D.C. out of its nightmare of misgovernment; but—sadly, and necessarily—it pushes the dream of statehood still further away.

BEST DEFENSE: In a remarkable exchange in *The Los Angeles Times Book Review* on January 5, Harvard professors A. Leon Higginbotham Jr., Charles J. Ogletree Jr. and David B. Wilkins attack their colleague Randall Kennedy, who, several weeks earlier, had panned Johnnie Cochran's apologia, *Journey to Justice*, for its vapidity and tendentiousness. In their two-column defense of Cochran, the three scholars assail Kennedy for "unfairly malign[ing] Cochran's honesty and integrity," and for contributing to the "public vilification of Cochran for actions falling squarely within the accepted standards for criminal defense lawyers." In fact, as Kennedy pointed out in his measured and compelling response to his critics, he had said nothing at all about Cochran's performance as a defense attorney; it was Cochran's sentimental and self-serving advertisement for himself that Kennedy found so risible. "The Higginbotham-Ogletree-Wilkins letter makes me appreciate Cochran's 'pull,'" Kennedy writes in his response. "It is rare (if not unprecedented) for several members of the Harvard University faculty to join forces in this way." Not so rare anymore. Now that Higginbotham, Ogletree and Wilkins have joined forces with Alan Dershowitz, Harvard has become the intellectual headquarters of the Simpson defense.

GERMAN LESSONS: The controversy began when Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, then a graduate student at Harvard, reviewed Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* in these pages (see TNR, July 13 & 20, 1992). Goldhagen was at the time finishing his own Ph.D. thesis on a similar subject. In March, 1996, Knopf published his *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*, which quickly became one of the decade's most talked about (and written about) books in the social sciences. Its controversial argument about the particularity and intensity of German anti-Semitism is pithily summed up in its title. From Berkeley to Cambridge, from New York to London, from Berlin to Jerusalem, its thesis turned dinner parties into heated debates about Goldhagen's argument. *Hitler's Willing Executioners* was reviewed just about everywhere, rather sharply in TNR by Omer Bartov (see TNR, April 29, 1996) but with high praise in other places. Despite the mixed reception, Goldhagen had clearly etched deeply into the serious mind of the generation—most notably in Germany, where the book promptly appeared at the top of the best-seller list and has remained for months. Now the highly respected *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* has bestowed its Democracy Prize on Daniel Goldhagen, honoring "the penetrating quality and moral power" of his book. Jürgen Habermas, perhaps the most important intellectual writing in the German language, will deliver the "laudatio" to Goldhagen. Congratulations to our longtime contributor.

WITH CHARITY FOR ALL: Okay, once more, and this time we mean it. The correction we ran in this spot one week ago was itself incorrect. The correct title of the book reviewed by Andrew Delbanco in our January 20 issue is: *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln.* Would that we had recollected them right the first time. •

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How Newt enriched himself.

COOKED BOOK

By Jonathan Chait

Newt Gingrich's ethics violations, if judged by the normal standards of politics, appear modest. But it's fair to judge Gingrich not by normal standards, but by the higher standards that he argued a House Speaker must live up to, back when he was bringing down Democratic Speaker Jim Wright. If Congress reckons with Gingrich's violations by the same exacting standards to which Gingrich held Wright, then Newt loses the Speakership. That's why Gingrich and his defenders have taken great pains to distinguish his case from Wright's. Their distinction is simple: unlike Wright's, Gingrich's shenanigans didn't make him any money.

It's a curious defense: Why is democracy more threatened by politicians who illegitimately acquire money than by those who illegitimately acquire power? But Gingrich harps on it obsessively ("I did not seek personal gain," he noted in his apology), as do his congressional allies ("No one contends that Newt ever sought personal financial gain from this course," Susan Molinari said at a press conference). Ethical arbiters in the media, accepting this premise, have devoted themselves to pondering the metaphysical question of which kind of corruption is worse. But the philosophizing is unnecessary. Gingrich's claim is objectively wrong. He violated tax law not only for political advantage, but *also* for personal advantage.

His transgression is relatively simple. The Progress & Freedom Foundation—a nonprofit, tax-exempt think tank to which he is closely linked—helped develop his college course, "Renewing American Civilization." It owned the rights to the course material and planned to turn that material into a book. In late 1994, the foundation turned over the project to Gingrich. Gingrich borrowed heavily from that material in compiling *To Renew America*. He then accepted a $4.5 million advance on the book, and after a political uproar forced him to take his fee in royalties instead, he ended up netting $471,000.

The violation? A tax-exempt organization cannot transfer wealth to shareholders or private individuals. Charitable organizations must serve public rather than private interests. The Salvation Army, for instance, couldn't let its director take the clothing the organization collects, sell it wholesale and keep the proceeds. This is called private inurement. In Gingrich's case, the inurement was the copyright to the course material.

The copyright obviously had monetary value, as evidenced by both the Progress & Freedom Foundation's initial interest in selling it and Gingrich's ultimate profit from his book. Moreover, the foundation spent close to half a million dollars developing Gingrich's college course. That included staff time researching quotes and facts, many of which made their way into the book.

That the book is derived from the foundation's material seems obvious. It reprints entire paragraphs of the course lectures almost verbatim, a fact that did not escape the notice of reviewers. (*The Washington Post*, for example, termed the book "a souped-up version of a college course [Gingrich] taught on weekends in Georgia.") But even if Gingrich *didn't* steal from the course, he still benefited from an inurement. A recent article in the weekly trade journal *Tax Notes* makes this point nicely. "Copyright protection or not, *To Renew America* represents a lost opportunity for the PFF [Progress & Freedom Foundation] to benefit economically from selling a popular version of the ideas espoused in the 'Renewing American Civilization' course," writes contributing editor Lee A. Sheppard. "The amount that the PFF spent developing the course can be used to gauge the amount of any private inurement."

To understand PFF's motive in giving away a valuable copyright, stop thinking of the foundation as a separate entity from Gingrich. "Gingrich *is* the Progress and Freedom Foundation," argues a Democratic staffer who has researched the issue. Journalists who claim that Gingrich controls the foundation invariably get an indignant letter from PFF President Jeff Eisenach pointing out that Gingrich holds no official position there. True enough, but if the "think tank"—Eisenach himself feels compelled to use quotations—is trying to pursue an agenda independent of Gingrich's, it's doing a pretty bad job of it. A huge share of its budget goes toward promoting the Speaker, who even hosted the foundation's television program. And PFF didn't just acquiesce in Gingrich's use of its copyright. Eisenach himself sought out a literary agent on Gingrich's behalf.

Now return to the Jim Wright analogy. Wright packaged a bunch of speeches into a book that he sold in bulk to lobbyists. The book served as an indirect way for lobbyists to line Wright's pockets. Gingrich simply found a more sophisticated way to do the same thing. Business organizations could donate unlimited sums, tax-free, to an organization that not only advanced Gingrich's political career—this is the "arcane tax law" that he so famously claims not to comprehend—but also his bank account. Both Wright and Gingrich set up sham intermediaries to let businesses funnel money into their pockets. For Wright, the sham was a book. For Gingrich, it's a foundation. Granted, Wright's book earnings depended on breaking the law whereas Gingrich's book earnings did not. Still, getting the course copyright for free clearly augmented the book's profitability; in other words, breaking the law fattened Newt's wallet. And if Gingrich concedes that, then he can no longer maintain that his transgression differs fundamentally from Wright's. •

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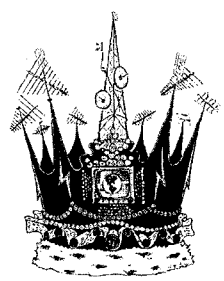
MEDIA REX

CHAIN OF COMMAND

By William Powers

It is the always the same: a large rumpled envelope, taped together a bit too obsessively and addressed in an eccentric scrawl. Inside is a gibbering narrative purporting to reveal dark connections between ostensibly unconnected events and people. The sender has been threatened by these people, and may be in danger. Attached is a sheaf of badly photocopied news articles, annotated as if they were items of proof.

Everyone who has spent any time as a reporter for a major news outlet has received at least a few of these peculiar packages. They are both amusing and a little sad. Last week one such missive arrived here. It had all the usual marks—the tape, the scrawled handwriting, the gibberish inside—but what made it unique was its return address: the White House. Inside was an analysis of something maladroitly dubbed the "Communication Stream of Conspiracy Commerce," which an unnamed White House writer defined as "the mode of communication employed by the right wing to convey their fringe stories into legitimate subjects of coverage by the mainstream media."



I had read articles about an administration report on the "media food chain," and asked the White House counsel's office for a copy. There was a chance this would be an interesting document, since there *is* a media food chain, through which some of the Clinton scandal stories have in fact emerged. The White House and the DNC, which produced this report, might offer some smart, albeit partisan, analysis of the news process.

"Smart" is not quite the right adjective for what the White House envelope gave forth. The contents ran to 331 pages, but this was a terrible case of bloat. The actual exposition of the White House's theory amounted to a few dozen pages; the remaining 300 consisted of press clips and other "evidence." The tone of the writing was so much like the right-wing conspiracy literature that was its subject that it seemed to consciously mimic it. This may be the first major conspiracy theory whose villains are conspiracy theorists.

The report's core notion is that at the bottom of the scandal-story food chain are a few ideologues, most notably a very rich man named Richard Mellon Scaife, who funds, as the White House puts it, "a virtual empire of right-wing newspapers and foundations." From this font rises all the Clinton dirt, which is cycled through the Internet and such rightist organs as *The American Spectator*, the British tabloids, *The Washington Times*, *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page and *The New York Post*. From these middlemen it flows up to Capitol Hill and finally on to the centrist establishment media at the top of the food chain, meaning *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the news pages of the *Journal*, and the television networks. Thus is fantasy made real.

This analysis has several flaws. One is its implication that there is something inherently wrong with news stories that originate with the administration's political enemies. In fact, partisan tipsters are one of the best sources of authentic news. When a news tip comes from a politician's enemies, good reporters know it must be pursued with particular care. But if such stories check out, they are no less valid for having begun with interested sources. Second, having assumed that all stories with right-wing origins are tainted, the report makes no effort to distinguish Clinton ethics stories that turned out to have merit from the trivia and the trash. In this report, the Paula Jones lawsuit is spoken of in the same terms as the Mena drug-trafficking story.

"Paula Jones appeared at a press conference organized by Clinton antagonist Cliff Jackson at the Conservative Political Action Committee conference," is the first, ominous entry in the report's recounting of the Paula Jones food chain, which ends with the mainstream media picking up the Jones story. Now, of course, we know what really happened with this story. *Because* her case originated with right wingers, Jones was largely shunned, and even ridiculed, by the mainstream press for more than two years. Only recently, after a story in *The American Lawyer* magazine shamed the centrists into taking another look, did they get over their squeamishness about the case. In other words, reporters afraid of being seen as tools of the ideologues shy away from giving some stories the aggressive, systematic scrutiny they deserve. Not surprisingly, the one story on which the press was for a long while most aggressive, Whitewater, originated at the very top of the food chain: it was broken by *The New York Times*.

The report's key flaw is its implication that the top news purveyors are passive receptors of muck from below. In fact, the mainstream outlets are extremely hesitant to run with a presidential scandal story that smells fishy. Thus, the Mena story (the unsubstantiated rumor that an Arkansas airstrip was the site of guns-for-drugs deals when Clinton was governor) has not made it even close to the top of the food chain because it does not meet the exacting standards of *The New York Times* et. al., and maybe never will.

The classic conspiracy theory proceeds from a series of statements that are inarguably true to a shocking conclusion that is not true. A façade of facile logic is employed to mask this. If A, B and C are true (which they are), then Z must be true (but it is not). The Clinton report leaps from A (there are ideologues circulating crazy stories about the president) to B (these stories

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are picked up by some biased news outlets) to C (the mainstream news outlets cover some Clinton scandals) to Z (thus, the ideologues have succeeded in pumping a wide array of lies about Clinton into the mainstream press, and making scandal out of nothing). A, B and C are true. Only Z is false. Do most Americans today think Vince Foster was murdered? Do most believe in the Mena conspiracy? No and no, because the mainstream press hasn't reported those stories as credible.

The White House's report was put together in July 1995, in response to the Vince-Foster-was-murdered rumors then reaching critical mass, and being taken seriously by Al D'Amato's Whitewater Committee, among others (an example of the White House theory actually working as described, up to a point). To counteract these stories, the White House took a pile of DNC-gathered clips, including examples of not only right-wing rumor-mongering but also mainstream stories *about* the rumors, and handed them out to reporters. An aide in the White House counsel's office wrote a two-and-a-half-page cover memo, tying the clips together in the "stream of conspiracy" theory. As one person involved in the process told me: "It was basically just someone taking twenty minutes and slapping the thing on there." When I asked about the report's conflation of solid stories with rumors, and its erroneous suggestion that the mainstream press was buying the rumors wholesale, this source said: "That was DNC stuff. The DNC was hauling out that crap at their press conferences."

So why is the White House now peddling this "crap" to the world? First, the White House *needs* conspiracy nuts as much as the nuts need Clinton. By putting the far-out stories beside the more credible ones and suggesting equivalency, the president's defenders sow doubt in the media about the validity of the stories the administration is really worried about—the ones based in fact.

Second, the White House is, like all television-age presidencies, frustrated by its inability to control the unruly, fecund culture of free expression. Wild, unproven stories are not the exclusive product of the right. The "October Surprise" stories that circulated about George Bush in 1992 are a perfect analogue to the Vince-Foster-was-murdered stories of a few years ago. Along similar lines is the recent *San Jose Mercury News* story suggesting the CIA pumped drugs into poor Los Angeles neighborhoods, which became an obsession of certain talk radio and Internet circles, though it was never validated by the top-tier press. Indeed, of all the media bashed in this report the one that seems to be most bothersome to the Clinton administration is the Internet. "[I]t allows," the report says, "an extraordinary amount of unregulated data and information to be located in one area and available to all. The right wing has seized upon the internet as a means of communicating its ideas to people. Moreover, evidence exists that Republican staffers surf the internet, interacting with extremists in order to exchange ideas and information."

Americans are trafficking in "unregulated" information and exchanging ideas. Imagine. •

Federico Peña takes Physics 101.

EDUCATING FEDDIE

By Hanna Rosin

John's son Bill is really, really mad at him, as well he should be. After a year of straight A's, the high-school junior almost failed his physics quiz on Thursday, and it's all his dad's fault. Bill had planned to go over some terms that morning in homeroom, but when he looked in his backpack his physics glossary was gone! As he learned that night, his dad had taken the book to work that morning. "It has a great diagram of nuclear fission," Dad explains feebly, "where the atoms look like kernels of popcorn, lumpy, like they should be, instead of the usual boring pool balls."

John has a Ph.D. in nuclear physics and has worked at the Department of Energy for over ten years. He really cares that pictures of atoms look like popcorn? Actually, he didn't need the diagram for himself, exactly. He needed it for a "Physics 101" packet he was helping to prepare for his boss, the new Secretary of Energy, Federico Fabian Peña—last term's Secretary of Transportation, best known for rushing to the Everglades to vouch for the safety record of ValuJet. (John feels bad about Bill's near-flunk, so bad that he considered, for a moment, using his real name so that Bill could show this article to his physics teacher; in the end, though, he thought better of it.)

John is merely one humble cog. Over the past two weeks, he and his colleagues at the Department of Energy have transformed themselves into a kind of Cabinet-level Princeton Review, with the single goal of cramming enough science and policy into Peña's brain to let him pass his confirmation hearings at the end of the month.

This is not fun through adult enrichment. The chairman of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Alaska Republican Frank Murkowski, has already slipped on his brass knuckles. "It will take a person with the proper professional background and a stiff backbone to succeed," he warned, in a December 19 press release red-flagged "CLINTON ENERGY NOMINEE FACES TOUGH CONFIRMATION." "I have let the White House know we will take our responsibility for a thorough and fair review very seriously. They should do their part by sending us a qualified nominee who can competently address nuclear waste issues and DOE control of our weapons programs." Well, gas tanks explode. The ValuJet plane kind of exploded. And Peña did once attend a conference on alternative fuels. Yet, somehow, the committee members are not impressed. Says one senior staffer: "He sent us the guy who screwed up ValuJet, and

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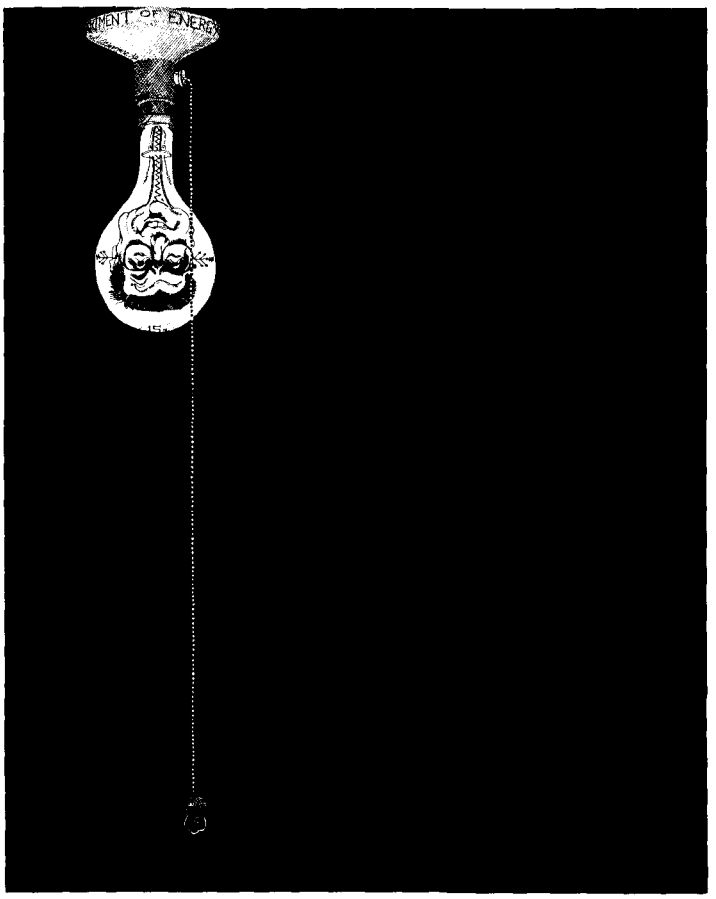
he expects us to trust him with our nuclear weapons?"

How did Peña get into this mess? The story is an old Clinton standby—the shifting affirmative action pyramid. On Thursday night, December 19, Clinton and Vice President Al Gore sat down to hash out the final Cabinet appointments, which the president wanted to announce the next morning. By mid-afternoon they had reached a deal with John Sweeney to make Ron Brown's former deputy Alexis Herman the new Secretary of Labor. That deal pushed aside the other candidate, California Congressman Esteban Torres. With Torres out, there would be no Hispanics in the Cabinet. Outgoing Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros pulled Clinton aside to complain. But at that point there were really no empty spots. Clinton had all but settled on Elizabeth Moler, chair of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), for Energy (Moler had already bought a new dress, had her hair done and flown her family to Washington). But the mousse was for naught. At 10 p.m., Gore called Moler to break the bad news. Meanwhile, Clinton tracked down Peña in Albuquerque, where he was visiting his wife's family, and told him to take his house off the market and hop on the next flight.



FEDERICO PEÑA BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

It could be argued that Hazel O'Leary, Peña's predecessor and a black woman, was also a diversity appointment, and to some degree she was. But O'Leary was also well qualified for the job. She had worked in Jimmy Carter's Energy Department, at an energy consulting firm and at a utility company. Peña was rumored to have visited a nuclear plant once while he was mayor of Denver. This makes the job of educating him on the Energy Department's varied and jargon-filled projects—maintaining the nuclear stockpile, cleaning up radioactive wastes, researching sources of renewable energy—a daunting one. "Briefing Hazel was like going from college into a graduate course," says one longtime energy consultant. "Peña is going from grade school into a graduate course, in one month. Other than gas tanks in airplanes and automobiles, he doesn't exactly have the prerequisites down."

The days are packed, the breaks short. At the beginning of the week, Peña gets a 600-page, three-ring binder stuffed with technicalities. Meetings are often scheduled from 9:30 to 4:30, with a half-hour for lunch. Wednesday, January 8, is a typical day—in the morning, a small dose of tritium and some nuclear safety; in the afternoon, sessions on cleanup issues and mental tours of the department's many laboratories. The briefs, according to those who wrote them, are not, so to speak, rocket science. "We are teaching him the very basics," says one staffer. "Things like what is fission, with definitions and pictures and slides, the nuts and bolts, like a high-school science lesson." Other sample lessons include: What is an alpha emitter? a neutron dose? plutonium?

Peña is not known for his overbearing ego. Still, it's important for staffers to approach their pedagogy with a certain sensitivity. "We don't want anyone to feel stupid, so we present it in an adult way," says another staffer. This means avoiding eighteen-point type, presenting definitions in a sober glossary and keeping the pictures and slide shows to a minimum. In the afternoon, after Peña has had a chance to absorb that morning's material, the assistant secretaries return to answer any questions and to nudge the lesson along to part two—going in one day from, say, "What is waste vitrification?" to "Should the U.S. store nuclear waste in Yucca Mountain?" This last question is not theoretical.

Ultimately, Peña's strained efforts may be in vain. So far, the Senate Energy Committee members seem to care much less about fission than about a simpler math question: Why did Peña's proudest accomplishment, the Denver airport, cost three times the original estimate? Other questions follow, such as, why were whistleblowers who complained about lapses in planning fired, and why were FBI agents who investigated the matter transferred to San Francisco? The questions may seem niggling, except that unlike the DOT—essentially a large grant-writing organization—the DOE actually builds things: major things, like nuclear waste storage facilities. "That airport really sticks in everyone's craw," says a senior committee staffer.

So what? The Department of Energy has survived clueless caretakers before, and it is an obscure agency

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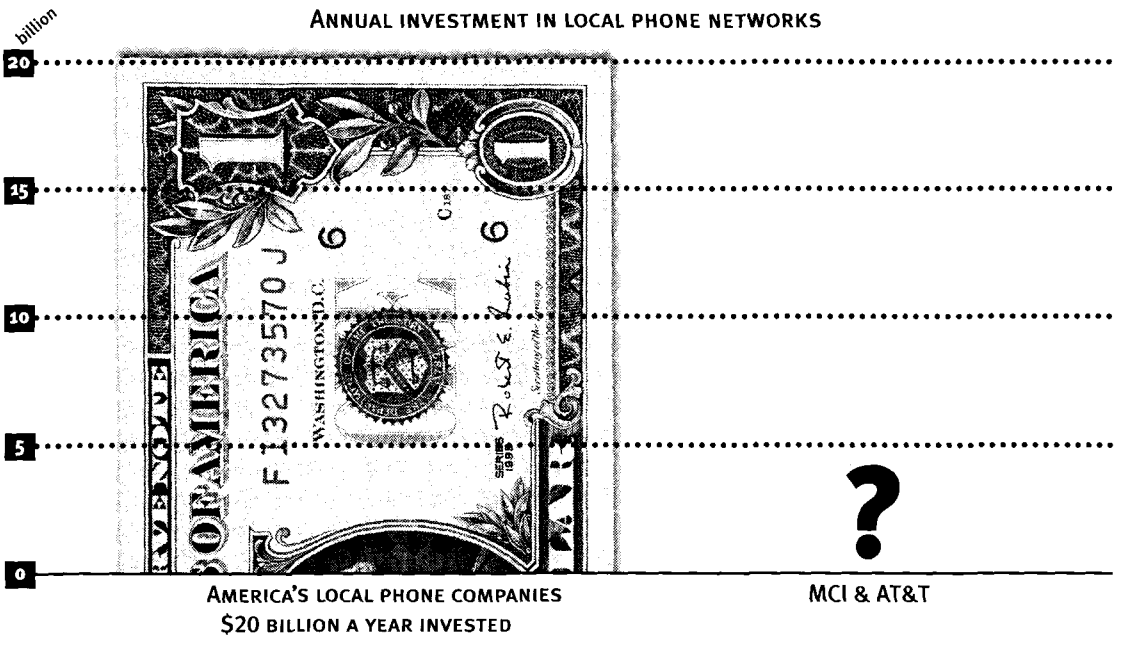

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"We want to use other people's assets and capital everywhere we can."
-AT&T vice president for Local Service

"We want to use other people's assets and capital everywhere we can," AT&T vice president for Local Services recently told *Business Week*.

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anyway. But, in fact, its low profile is its greatest asset. Most of the key nuclear issues of the post-cold war era—securing Russian sites against theft, pursuing a testing moratorium, storing contaminated waste—are handled at the DOE. Were the agency to disappear, these tasks would most likely be transferred to the Department of Defense, an addled bureaucracy that operates in total secrecy. Twice in O'Leary's tenure the Republicans tried to eliminate the Department of Energy, and twice she saved it, by a hair, and with a large store of knowledge. Peña may not be so lucky. Says one resigned DOE staffer, "Peña is the white flag." •

Why Paula Jones has no case.

ONE BITE AT THE APPLE

By Jeffrey Rosen

At the Supreme Court arguments on Monday, January 13, in *Clinton* v. *Jones*, the justices seemed inclined to delay Paula Jones's sexual harassment suit until the president leaves office, because the president is a busy man. But even if President Clinton is temporarily spared the mortifying task of answering Jones's complaint, his trial in the court of popular opinion has already begun. In the wake of an article by Stuart Taylor in *The American Lawyer*, there is a growing consensus that not only are Paula Jones's allegations true, but that they also amount to a clear case of legally actionable sexual harassment—a "far more serious" case, Taylor argues, than Anita Hill's accusations against Clarence Thomas.

I'm inclined to believe the broad outlines of Hill's charges against Thomas and of Jones's charges against Clinton; but neither ordeal, I think, should be legally actionable. Hill never claimed at the time that her unpleasant encounters with Clarence Thomas rose to the level of illegal sexual harassment. And it strikes me as even more implausible to claim, as Jones does, that Clinton violated her constitutional rights when he made a pass at her, took no for an answer and reassured her that he meant her no harm. Clinton's conduct, to be sure, suggests a moral recklessness, and coarseness of character, that can only embarrass and discomfit those of us who are trying to sustain our enthusiasm for him. But to claim that the president violated not only Jones's honor, but also her constitutional rights, shows how dramatically our increasingly amorphous conception of sexual harassment has expanded in the past decade. If and when the time comes, a judge could dismiss the *Clinton* v. *Jones* case on a motion for summary judgment. The harassment wasn't "severe or pervasive," as current law requires; even an egregious groper gets one bite at the apple.

Here are the facts, as Paula Jones alleges them. On May 18, 1991, while working at the registration desk for the Governor's Quality Management Conference, she says she was approached by Clinton's bodyguard, Trooper Danny Ferguson, who handed her a piece of paper with the number of a hotel suite written on it. "The governor would like to meet with you," he said, and Jones agreed to follow him upstairs. Clinton invited Jones in and made small talk: he asked Jones about her job and volunteered that Jones's supervisor, David Harrington, is "my good friend." According to the complaint, "Clinton then took Jones's hand and pulled her toward him"; Jones removed her hand and retreated. Clinton approached her again. "I love your curves," he said, and he attempted to kiss Jones on the neck; he also "put his hand on Plaintiff's leg and started sliding it toward the hem of Plaintiff's culottes." "What are you doing?" Jones exclaimed, escaping to the end of the sofa. After asking whether Jones was married, "Clinton then approached the sofa and as he sat down he lowered his trousers and underwear exposing his erect penis and asked Jones to 'kiss it.' "

Let's assume that Jones's factual allegations are true, as a judge would have to do when faced with a motion to dismiss the case on summary judgment. Are her legal claims convincing? First, Jones says she "should not have been subjected arbitrarily to the fear of losing [her] job or of having to provide sex to the governor as a quid pro quo for keeping the job." Quid pro quo harassment, of course, occurs when submission to sexual demands is made a condition of employment, and by this standard Jones's position seems weak. She concedes that Clinton said, "Well, I don't want to make you do anything you don't want to do" after she rebuffed him; and her career suffered no adverse consequences that can be convincingly tied to Clinton. (Indeed, she received raises on schedule.) Jones says that she was in "constant fear" that Clinton might retaliate against her; but an unwanted advance can't be converted into quid pro quo harassment simply because of the victim's fear.

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SOCIAL ISSUES

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The most troubling part of Jones's allegations is her claim that Clinton threatened her by reminding her that he knew her boss. "If you get in trouble for leaving work, have Dave call me immediately and I'll take care of it," he supposedly said, adding, "You are smart. Let's keep this between ourselves." The tenor of these remarks is sufficiently opaque that a judge could conceivably let a jury decide what Clinton meant. But when the remarks are viewed in context, it seems clear that Clinton was reassuring Jones, rather than threatening her, and trying to save face after his appalling misjudgment.

Jones's claim that she suffered from "hostile environment" harassment is just as questionable. According to federal regulations, hostile environment harassment involves "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature," when "such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment." There's a serious factual dispute, first of all, about whether or not Clinton's advances were "unwelcome." When Trooper Ferguson introduced himself to Jones, Michael Isikoff reported in *The Washington Post*, he conveyed the following message: "The governor said you make his knees knock." This flirty invitation, if Ferguson actually delivered it, makes it hard to believe Jones's claim that she thought visiting Clinton was merely an opportunity to improve her employment prospects. There's no convincing evidence, furthermore, that Jones's ordeal unreasonably interfered with her job performance. Clinton had no direct supervisory authority over her, and she left her job on her own accord.

It's extremely rare for a single sexual advance to be punished as sexual harassment: the Supreme Court has emphasized that harassment, to be actionable, must be "sufficiently severe or pervasive to ... create an abusive working environment." The EEOC's most recent Policy Guidance on Sexual Harassment says that "unless the conduct is quite severe, a single incident or isolated incidents of offensive sexual conduct or remarks generally do not create an abusive environment." The guidelines stress, however, that "the more severe the harassment, the less need to show a repetitive series of incidents," particularly when the harassment is physical. In a 1983 case, for example, a single incident constituted actionable harassment when the defendant grabbed the plaintiff's crotch and talked dirty to her while they were inside a car from which she couldn't easily escape. Jones says she felt "falsely imprisoned" by the armed trooper outside the door; but she was not, in fact, restrained in any way.

Clinton's physical contact with Jones wasn't intimate enough, furthermore, to be clearly forbidden under current law. The EEOC presumes that "the unwelcome, intentional touching of a charging party's intimate body areas is sufficiently offensive to alter the conditions of her working environment." Clinton grasped Jones's hand and legs, and tried to kiss her neck, but he didn't touch her genitals or breasts, which the EEOC defines as "intimate body areas." He did, according to Jones, expose his *own* "intimate body areas." This display might be challenged as indecent exposure; but it doesn't support a clear case of "hostile environment" harassment.

Up to this point, I've been examining Jones's harassment claim as if she had filed it under title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. But in fact, Jones missed the deadline for filing a title VII claim; instead she accuses Clinton of violating her *constitutional* right to equal protection of the law. How, precisely, the right to be free from a "hostile working environment," which was invented by Catharine MacKinnon in the 1970s, and read into the civil rights laws by the Supreme Court in 1980, became a constitutional right in the 1990s, is a murky and intellectually unsatisfying tale. No court, however, has found that a single incident of harassment is enough to violate constitutional rights.

To sustain her constitutional claim, Jones has to argue that Clinton acted in his official capacity, "under color of state law." But surely a state governor doesn't act in his official capacity every time he makes a pass at a state employee. It's true that Clinton had a state trooper invite Jones to visit him; but there's no evidence that she was coerced by the trooper in any way. At a recent Supreme Court argument in a case called *U.S.* v. *Lanier*, some of the justices expressed skepticism at the claim that a state judge acted "under color of law," even when he coerced court employees to have sex with him, exposed his genitals and tried to retaliate against litigants in child custody cases who rebuffed his sexual assaults. Justice Kennedy asked whether a janitor on the state payroll who raped a woman in a courthouse broom closet would be acting in an official capacity. Justice Ginsburg wondered whether a judge who picked a prisoner out of a lineup and raped her would be more likely to be acting "under color of law." But all these examples look very different from what Clinton is said to have done: inviting to a private room a woman over whom he had no direct supervisory authority, making a pass at her and abashedly accepting her rebuff. If Jones's claims are true, Clinton is guilty of violating standards of common decency, manners and morals, but not the Constitution.

In the *Lanier* case, the Clinton Justice Department has taken a position that, in addition to being constitutionally implausible, could seriously undermine President Clinton's defense in the *Jones* case. The administration argues that intentional sexual assaults by state officials violate the due process clause of the Constitution because there is a "right to be free from invasions of bodily integrity that shock the conscience." The appellate court had held that the "shock the conscience" test was far too amorphous to give defendants fair warning of whether or not their conduct was a federal crime; although the marauding judge should be prosecuted for rape and sexual assault, the court held, he could hardly have expected to be prosecuted for violating the Consti-

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tution as well. President Clinton's conduct toward Paula Jones may not "shock the conscience" as dramatically as Judge Lanier's conduct toward his employees; but the malleability of the standard is a powerful reason for rejecting it.

Stuart Taylor performed a useful service in pointing to a journalistic double standard: some commentators who were quick to embrace Anita Hill were quick to belittle Paula Jones. Whether the double standard can be explained by class bias or political partisanship, or simply by the different arenas in which the charges arose, is a diverting if not terribly momentous question, to be pondered by media watchdogs of all stripes. But no one is ignoring *Clinton* v. *Jones* now that it has reached the Supreme Court; and in the rush to take seriously Jones's plausible factual claims, it would be a grave error if we made the mistake of taking seriously Jones's implausible constitutional claims.

One of the many pathological legacies of the Clarence Thomas hearings is that conduct that not even Anita Hill suggested was actionable at the time has been elevated, in the popular imagination, into a paradigm case of illegal sexual harassment. Now the *Jones* case threatens to distort our cultural boundaries further still, converting a gross sexual advance, which almost certainly is not illegal under the federal civil rights laws, into a violation of the Constitution itself. In addition to punishing, with ruinous civil damages, a great deal of sexual expression at work that should be protected, this relentless urge to define deviancy up has obscured the core meaning of sexual harassment: gender discrimination that pervades the workplace and makes it harder for an employee to do the job. We will come to regret the increasingly voracious legalization of sex, which threatens to leave no unregulated spaces in which citizens can embarrass themselves in private. •

Rahm Emanuel, centrist of the universe.

THE MAN WHO WOULD BE GEORGE

By Roger Simon

It is late afternoon on Christmas Eve and the West Wing of the White House is almost empty except for Rahm Emanuel, who is sitting in his office, taking and making his own phone calls and, as always, looking out his window. It is, perhaps, the best window in the building. From it he not only can monitor who comes and goes into the West Wing (he especially loves the military flag ceremonies that accompany the visits of foreign dignitaries), but he can also see who is being interviewed by the TV reporters from their stakeout positions on the North Lawn. Today, however, there are no visitors and the stakeout positions are empty. The sky is darkening to blue-black, and almost everyone in the federal city is off, thinking thoughts of goodwill. But not Emanuel.

The president's new George Stephanopoulos is yelling. "No federal funds for Ebonics!" He slaps the small round table in front of him. He is not angry; this is a moment of triumph. He is not demanding that there be a policy of no federal funds for the teaching of Ebonics in public schools; he is announcing that he has achieved this. But he is annoyed at the time it took. "It took me a day *and a half* to put that together," he says. That extra half-day rankles him. Why so long to establish a federal policy? "Riley wanted to make sure his *legal* staff was on board," Emanuel says. He is speaking of Richard Riley, the Secretary of Education. "Riley has this funny way of talking, like those frogs on the Budweiser commercial: 'Bud ... wei ... ser.... Bud ... wei ... ser.'" Emanuel now does an imitation of Riley, surely one of the rarer imitations in Washington: "'The policy is right, we're right on the policy, but we want to make sure *legal* is on board.'" Emanuel shakes his head. "This is the year we want to focus on *raising* educational standards. Ebonics would be moving the *other way*."

The phone rings and Emanuel picks it up. "I'm flakking today," Emanuel says to a White House staffer on the other end. "We're going to get a pretty good *New York Times* and *Washington Post* story on the Ebonics thing. ABC has called. But someone be sure to call *USA Today*. And call Headline News. If we have to put somebody on TV for them, we will." All of which is very much the Emanuel trademark: the on-the-wing creation of an easily understood and centrist new policy that is symbolically, New Democratically right—followed up by maximum media exposure. And if the Department of Education wants an extra half-day to make sure everything is actually within the law, that's OK, more or less.

ROGER SIMON is a nationally syndicated columnist.

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"Bureaucracies are the enemy," Emanuel says. "They don't have the initiative. The president has the initiative. *We will bubble with initiative.* There is no time to rest. I'm impatient. I'm hyperactive. But we need to gain the initiative!"

If he is eager this day to gain the initiative from a brand new office, which happens to be filled with cardboard boxes full of leavings from its previous occupant, Emanuel does not say so. It is enough that everyone in the White House knows he has gotten George's office, a perk he insisted upon. Having already announced he was leaving the White House, there was no way Emanuel was going to be persuaded to stay without it. It is a tiny office, more architectural afterthought than workspace, but in the White House, size does not matter. Stephanopoulos's office, the office of the Senior Adviser to the President for Policy and Strategy (Emanuel also insisted upon George's title), is the closest work space to the Oval Office. Behind the small but lovely desk is a door. And behind that door is the private dining room of the Oval Office. And quite often, especially in the first two years of his presidency, that door would open and the president of the United States would poke his head around it and say, "George, I need you."

RAHM EMANUEL BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

"George was, in some ways, the conscience for Clinton," presidential spokesman Mike McCurry says. "George would talk about the reasons we were all here and why we called ourselves Democrats—real liberal theology. But Clinton is much more surefooted now in what he wants to do in his second term. He is much more oriented in accomplishments and getting things done." And he no longer needs a liberal conscience.

Enter Rahm Emanuel. Where Stephanopoulos was patient, quiet, left-liberal and totally devoted to his president, Emanuel is impatient, loud, a centrist and totally devoted to his president. "He gets things done," Chief of Staff Erskine Bowles says. "He gets them done on time, and he gets them done right." That may sound mundane, but these are the qualities that matter in a functioning White House, which Clinton only got after living through the disaster years of 1993 and 1994.

With Emanuel's appointment, the staff arguments between the left and the right in the White House appear to be over or at least subdued. The issues that Emanuel has pursued for the last few years as White House director of special projects—NAFTA, the crime bill, the assault weapons ban and immigration reform—are the very issues that defined Clinton as a centrist. At first, the motives were defensive. "If you look across at what for the past twenty years have been wedge issues—crime, welfare and, recently, immigration—I think on all those fronts we have developed a very thorough and tough policy that from a political standpoint makes those policies unassailable," Emanuel told *The Washington Post* during the 1996 campaign. If you move to the right, you can't be attacked from the right. But what started as political tactics coalesced into a strategy of governance. The center is where Clinton is comfortable, where he wants to be for his second term.

The days at the Immigration and Naturalization Service would always begin the same way. "The phone would ring early in the morning," a senior staffer there says, "and there would be this voice saying, 'You piece of shit, what have you got for me today? What have you done for the *president* today? What are you doing *right now*?' And it would be Rahm. No matter how early you came in, Rahm had already been working for an hour. No matter how late you stayed, Rahm was still at the White House."

In four years at the White House, he took only four trips with Clinton. He was much happier staying home, monitoring the traffic on the White House lawn and pushing the agenda. "Wedge issues are truly what Emanuel lives for," the INS staffer says. "Every three weeks we'd have 'dark cabal' meetings where we'd gather and talk about immigration control, and Rahm would be very outspoken. As long as we dealt with *illegal*

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immigration, we could be to the right of Attila the Hun. Rahm felt that Americans believed too many people were coming into this country, too many foreigners, so he wanted to show the administration *returning* people, *deporting* them, putting up *bigger* fences, sending them *back*. That's how Rahm viewed it; he viewed it from the eye of the prospective voter, from Joe and Judy Six-Pack. He has an uncanny feel for that."

And if that kind of immigration policy sounded faintly like Pat Buchanan's immigration policy, well, Pat Buchanan's supporters were more than welcome to vote for Bill Clinton. (On Election Day 1996, one out of every five persons identifying himself as a conservative voted for Bill Clinton.) Emanuel didn't push Clinton to the center; he helped develop policies to show people that Bill Clinton was already there.

Take school uniforms. Over lunch at a restaurant near the White House, Emanuel told the story of how the policy came to be, and the whole time he talked about it, he kept scratching his fingers on the white tablecloth, making little scritchy-scritchy noises. This, it turns out, is an approximation of the sound of the chatter from the staff as Bill Clinton is rehearsing his 1996 State of the Union speech in front of them. (Other presidents might pass speeches around for comment; Clinton likes to perform.) Clinton reads the speech aloud until he gets to an endorsement of school uniforms—so kids won't be killed for what they are wearing—and, scritchy-scritchy, the trouble begins.

Mark Penn, Clinton's pollster, had tested school uniforms (no administration has ever polled as much as the Clinton administration) and the issue had not gone over well. Besides, the speech is too long anyway, so why not just cut this part? Emanuel disagreed. School uniforms are a good issue, and he wanted school uniforms in the speech. "School uniforms is a way for the president to bring together two things: education and a disciplined environment for kids to learn in," he argued. This is Emanuel's specialty: seeing how things fit together. School uniforms were education, they were crime, they were discipline. And more. To Emanuel, school uniforms were everything except school uniforms. He didn't really care about the actual uniforms. The point was the symbol of the uniforms. "Uniforms were a manifestation of greater parental involvement in the schools," Emanuel says. And what parent didn't want that?

Scritchy-scritchy went the talk around the room. Were uniforms effective? Was it fair to make parents buy them? What did the civil libertarians think? "Screw it," Clinton finally said, and the chatter stopped. "It stays in. And here's how I want to say it." And he wrote something about how if school uniforms save just one life, let's do it. (When he later delivered that line in his State of the Union speech, it brought down the house.) Afterwards, Emanuel got some slaps on the back from other staffers for going toe to toe with the pollsters and winning. He now admits, however, to having had a wee

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little ace up his sleeve. "I knew school uniforms were in Hillary's book," he says.

Emanuel is 37 years old, whippet thin and handsome, with large brown eyes and dark hair shot through with gray. He swims a mile a day, three days a week, and every Saturday and Sunday he takes time out for private ballet lessons. One day in Little Rock in 1992 he came out of class and bumped into the Clintons. "There they are taking Chelsea for her ballet class," Emanuel told *People* magazine, "and out comes their national finance director in his leotard and tights."

That is how he started out with the Clintons: raising money. Everyone agrees he was terrific at it. "This is an insult!" he would scream into the phone. "Five thousand is an insult! You are a $25,000 person! I won't take it. It is beneath you! I am sending the check back!" And he would slam the receiver down and wait. And the phone would ring and the person would be begging to give more money.

"He did a fabulous job raising money," says a woman who worked with him in Little Rock in the 1992 campaign—and who refused a White House job rather than ever work in proximity to him again. "He was relentless in pursuit of money. He would stand on the desk—*on* the desk!—and shout, 'Goddamit, Bill Clinton is not going down there to that fund-raiser for that kind of money! We want more! More!' When he was on the phone, I never saw him sitting down."

When Emanuel left his hometown of Chicago, where he had worked on Richard M. Daley's mayoral campaigns and where he headed his own opposition research consulting firm, to come to Little Rock in November, 1991, he did not find a well-oiled machine. "I called and said I was coming down Sunday and could somebody pick me up at the airport and then I would like to meet my staff," Emanuel says.

"Well, I'll pick you up," the guy at Clinton headquarters told Emanuel, "but nobody here works Sundays."

"You do now," Emanuel replied. Which was a good idea, considering the Clinton campaign had only about $600,000 in the bank. But in something like twenty days between Thanksgiving and Christmas, Emanuel organized twenty-six fund-raisers that raised more than $3 million. And after that he just kept going and raised $17.3 million. "The money was credibility," Emanuel says. "It showed that a governor from the state of Arkansas could play in the major leagues." By February, 1992, Clinton was being rocked by stories of extramarital affairs and draft evasion, and here the money helped save him. "During the primaries with [Gennifer] Flowers and the letter to the draft board thing, the money we raised was a test of whether the campaign had staying power and strength in the legs," Emanuel says. "That's the way money is interpreted by the national media. They see money as a vital sign, like taking a patient's temperature."

But in raising that money, Emanuel made a critical decision that resonates today. Instead of raising money through direct mail, which was a popular but expensive method, he decided to raise money through fund-raisers. "They don't require a lot of up-front money," he says. Instead they require up-front time, the time of the candidate. He laid it out for Clinton: make the time and you can make the millions. Clinton made the time.

But when the campaign was finished, Emanuel had the survival instinct to leave fund-raising behind him. "I don't want to be known as a fund-raiser," he told *Chicago* magazine in 1992. "It ain't what I'm going to be doing November the eighth, I'll tell you that." He left fund-raising behind, but he also left a legacy, a fund-raising operation built upon the use of a president who had learned that his mere presence at an event could persuade people to contribute huge sums to his campaign coffers and to those of the Democratic Party. By the 1996 campaign, it was Clinton who was asking his fund-raising staff why they had not assembled more events for big donors. Didn't they know how much people would contribute just to shake his hand?

That lay in the future, though. There were no fund-raising scandals in 1992, and today Emanuel is proud of the fact that he has never had to testify before a congressional investigating committee. (Though he had to give testimony to staff investigators from the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee about Travelgate.) Emanuel may have been an aggressive fund-raiser, but he was also a careful one. At the time Emanuel was working in downtown Little Rock, so were a number of the people now embroiled in the Clinton soft-money scandal: Charles Yah Lin Trie, owner of Clinton's favorite Chinese restaurant; James Riady, who was connected to the Worthen Bank there; and John Huang of the Lippo Group. But no one has connected anything Emanuel did with any of those men. "I never met or talked to or knew Trie," Emanuel says. "I never met or talked to or knew Riady, although I did talk to an individual at the Worthen Bank. And John Huang, as I remember, he didn't help in '92, until late in the general election. I didn't talk to him until the end of the summer of '92, and at that time I was at the DNC."

You can talk to Emanuel for hours and hear him speak only about domestic policy. But when you ask Bill Daley, the Secretary of Commerce-designate, who worked with Emanuel in Chicago and on NAFTA, what the one thing is that Emanuel really believes in, really cares about, Daley answers instantly: "Anything to do with Israel. He has such strong attachments, religious and emotional." Emanuel's paternal grandfather left Odessa and emigrated to Palestine in 1917. His father was born there in 1922. His grandfather supported David Ben-Gurion's underground *Haganah* in the fight for Israeli independence, and his father fought in Menachem Begin's underground *Irgun*, running guns and putting up movie posters that carried secret codes. When Emanuel's

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uncle, Manuel, died in the fighting, the family changed its name from Auerbach to Emanuel to honor him. His father, now a doctor, and his American-born mother, who would become very active in the civil rights movement, moved from Israel to America in 1959, and Rahm was born four months later. For the next fifteen years, he maintained dual American-Israeli citizenship, dropping Israeli citizenship only when keeping it would have meant being subject to the Israeli military draft.

In 1991, when Emanuel was working on the reelection campaign of Richard Daley, the Gulf war broke out. At a time when thousands of Israelis were leaving Israel, Emanuel flew there to volunteer. (Emanuel is missing half the middle finger on his right hand, and, while rumors abound in Washington that he lost it to a Syrian tank, in fact he cut himself on a meat slicer while working at Arby's as a teenager.) Emanuel spent the duration of the brief war working at an army base in Northern Israel, rust-proofing brakes.

But Emanuel does not talk much about the Gulf war, or anything having to do with Israel. "Foreign policy is *not* what I get involved in," he says. "I don't give opinions on it. I'm not a back door to the president on foreign policy. I don't contribute unless asked."

And has Clinton ever asked? Once, after the fact, about "the settlements issue," Emanuel says, but will provide no more details.

It is very much the operating style of Bill Clinton, however, to ask the people close to him what they think about an array of matters and then compare their answers. And, a senior White House official says, Clinton privately has gone to Emanuel and said, "You understand the Israelis better than anyone else, what do you think is going on?" And Emanuel has given his analysis.

And whether he wishes to talk about it or not, no person with ties so close to Israel has ever been this close to an American president. Emanuel believes his enemies will try to use that against him, but he is prepared for it. "Nobody is going to be able to accuse me of dual loyalty," he says, choking up. "I know the promise and commitment of America. I know what this country has done for my family."

Almost every day, the senior policy, communications and administrative staff of the White House gather in the Oval Office for what is called the "pre-brief." Here they tell the president what he can expect from the public event he is about to face, the political implications, the questions he is likely to get from reporters and how he might want to address them. It is a formal event. Clinton sits behind his desk and his staff stands before him in a semi-circle. George Stephanopoulos always stood at the center of the semi-circle. One day in December, Rahm Emanuel took that spot. "Let's get your answer down to one-two-three, Mr. President," Emanuel said that day about Clinton's next budget. "Let's ask ourselves what you want to say here, state the goal, state the policy, and then say it: one-two-three. But let's get *moving*." •

The sleazification of an American ritual.

DOING THE INAUGURAL HUSTLE

By Peter Beinart

"Washington never looked better or felt better," reported Thomas Friedman in the January 21, 1993, *New York Times*, the day after Bill Clinton's inauguration as president. "Cheerful chaos reigned" and the city "glittered in the January sun." Several column inches away, R. W. Apple reflected on "the solemn magic of the moment." Visitors to the capital gushed. "I've had this wave of patriotism which I thought was an antiquated experience," declared Rob Morrow, Dr. Fleishman from the now defunct "Northern Exposure."

In Building 159-E of the old Navy Yard, in a Southeast Washington neighborhood that public relations officers euphemistically call "inconvenient," the mood among the junior staff of the 1993 presidential inaugural committee was somewhat different. "You can't really understand how miserable it was," remembers one former staffer. "It was the worst job I have ever had." "I was nauseated by the whole thing," says another. "It was among the most hellish experiences of my life." "At the time," says a third, "I thought Washington was pure evil."

A presidential inaugural is a necessary thing. In a world where most people greet transfers of power with locked doors and boarded storefronts, it is a sign of our democracy's health that Americans are still moved by the peaceful, lawful transfer of power. And for two centuries, they have celebrated with two genuinely democratic, patriotic and nonpartisan rituals: a public

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swearing-in and a parade.

But in the past two decades, these traditions have been joined by two relatively new ones. The first is essentially a vast private bash, a constellation of balls, dinners and cocktail receptions. This endlessly sordid feature of modern inaugurals—the corporate donors looking for one last way to express their affection for the incoming president; passed-over campaign workers jockeying for the few Schedule C appointments that haven't already been sewn up by those faster of grasp and fleeter of foot; junior congressmen and senior senators, governors, mayors and county chairs all competing for the tickets they need to pay back their own financial supporters—is, in contrast to the swearing-in and the parade, self-evidently undemocratic and nakedly partisan. And while its devotees often explain their participation as an expression of patriotism, it is precisely this bazaar of money, schmooze and partisanship that soured the inaugural staffers on American politics.

The second modern innovation consists of a huge outpouring of low-rent preachifying, second- and third-rate pop entertainment and commercial schlock spread out over several days and across the Mall. The 1993 edition featured an HBO "Call for Reunion" concert at the Lincoln Memorial, interspersing the music of Tony Bennett and LL Cool J with historical readings from Jack Nicholson and Oprah Winfrey. It was followed by a Harry and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason "Bells for Hope" national bell-ringing ceremony that greeted President Clinton as he led a group of children across the Memorial Bridge from Virginia into the District of Columbia. This year's "more reflective" sequel includes a choir consisting of congregants from arson-damaged churches and synagogues, a sea of identity-based foods and acts, and huge heated tents where "great thinkers" such as Elie Wiesel, Cornel West, Ken Burns, Betty Friedan and Whoopi Goldberg will make their *pensées* available to the public. This immense banality serves two functions: to provide a democratic diversion from the unedifying private inaugural and to offer nationally televised agitprop designed to appear nonpartisan while actually pushing the ideology of the party in power. The sentiments of Thomas Friedman notwithstanding, Washington had indeed looked and felt better than it did on January 20, 1993.

Although their modern function is new, today's mass of invitation-only parties and receptions do have a precursor: the inaugural ball. The ball, made official by James Madison in 1809, from the beginning represented anti-democracy, an elite's private welcome to a new administration. But throughout the nineteenth century, and for much of the twentieth, that elite was local and nonpartisan. A segment of Washington society sponsored inaugural balls (Martin Van Buren added a second in 1837) for much the same reason the elders of a church might throw a reception for an incoming minister: to introduce the new president to the people with whom he would socialize and whose peculiarities he would need to understand. Native Washingtonians staffed inaugural planning committees, local businesses often provided sponsorship, and both did so with little reference to party affiliation. Every four years, as Philip Brooks Jr., the official historian/archivist for the 1969, 1989 and 1993 inaugurals, puts it, the committee organizing the inaugural would ask itself, "'how can we improve on what we did last time?' not 'how can we improve on what they did last time?'" As late as 1961, John F. Kennedy spent the night before his swearing-in at a party sponsored not by the government relations office of a national corporation, but by local social captain (and *Washington Post* publisher) Philip Graham. And even in 1969, O. Roy Chalk, the owner of the District's transit system, still had his workers put up placards downtown reading, "WELCOME TO WASHINGTON PRESIDENT RICHARD M. NIXON—O. ROY CHALK."

But the old-style inaugural was entering its last days, as was the old Washington society itself. Kennedy's decision to televise the inaugural gala—a Hollywood-run (Frank Sinatra-produced) show of song and dance—turned the inaugural into programming. And television nationalized what had been largely a local event.

The final break came with the election of Jimmy Carter. A fiend for symbolism that would exploit post-Vietnam, post-Watergate popular dislike of the Washington elite, Carter made it his business to kill the old inaugural. His key advisers remained in Atlanta between his election and his swearing-in, and in the words of John Wallace, the official historian/archivist for the 1973, 1981 and 1985 inaugurals, they "didn't want to deal with people who knew anything about Washington." Carter's resolutely anti-elitist "People's Inaugural" cut the budget of Nixon's 1973 event in half. He renamed the balls "parties" and insisted that tickets cost no more than $25 (in 1973 they had ranged from $40 to $1,000). He made the gala free, and for the first time held public inaugural celebrations on the Mall. Business suits replaced tuxedos, and Carter famously exited his limousine and walked down Pennsylvania Avenue.

Carter's inaugural was a failure. He rightly sensed that Americans did not want inaugurals controlled by a Washington elite, but wrongly assumed that the answer lay in modesty and frugality. He was mocked for serving pretzels and peanuts at the balls, for sending out commemorative invitations on cheap paper and for allowing amateurs to perform at events. The occasion lost its gravitas. In Wallace's words, "he tried to make the inaugural something it wasn't."

With the local inaugurals a thing of the past, and Carter's populist alternative having misfired, Ronald Reagan created the model for the national inaugural that has since become the norm. The 1981 inaugural committee built its inaugural on the same foundations on which Ronald Reagan had built his campaign: aggres-

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sive fund-raising from corporations with a business interest in government policy, and the adept use of television to spread an ideological message. The Reaganites realized that the same desire to curry favor that made corporate interests give vast sums to candidates could also induce them to fund lavish inaugurals. With that in mind, the inaugural committee sharply raised ticket prices, increased staff and instituted a series of $500-per-plate candlelight dinners for large donors the night before the swearing-in. The Reagan committee raised five times what the Carter inaugural had, and Michael Deaver, the mastermind behind the project, deployed the money in much the same way he had during the campaign: to create dazzling television. The parade was trimmed to a made-for-TV one hour. Johnny Carson was brought in to host the gala. And the Reagans used television to turn a Carter innovation, free events on the Mall, into a feel-good commercial for the Reagan spirit.

It was the Reaganites, too, who first saw that inaugurals could temporarily house the growing numbers of campaign staff seeking to enter the new administration. And unlike Carter's small inaugural staff, which had played a minor role in the campaign and took no major positions in the administration, Reagan's served as home to some of his top campaign fund-raisers and media gurus, several of whom assumed key White House posts.

The modern inaugural was now fully in place. The old, local inaugurals had marked a disjuncture with the presidential campaign: they represented an administration's absorption into a social milieu isolated from the people who elected it, and in this way they, too, were undemocratic. But the new national inaugurals are undemocratic in a way both more ambitious and more insidious: they perpetuate the aspects of modern presidential campaigns that *themselves* isolate politicians from the mass of their constituents. Television ads link politicians to voters, but the obligations candidates incur to raise the money to fund such ads make them less accountable to those voters. Similarly, the increasing sums raised by inaugural committees to fund the television extravaganzas that millions watch, and for the free events on the Mall that thousands attend, obligate them to financial interests with a stake in gaining access to a new administration.

If anything, today's inaugurals actually exceed campaigns in the corruption to which they give rise. During a presidential campaign, the expectation that a donation will bring a desired policy outcome is more uncertain. After all, the favored candidate may not even win. But inaugural contributions are certain to go to someone whose gratitude will matter. And they also allow corporations that have backed a president's opponent a last chance to make amends, as prominent GOP supporter Dwayne Andreas of Archer Daniels Midland did when he donated $100,000 to Bill Clinton's inaugural in 1993.

More importantly, though, donations given during the course of a campaign are regulated (if meekly) by the Federal Election Commission. But since presidential inaugural committees are by law private entities, there are no legal rules on how much a donor can give; gifts needn't even be disclosed at all. During a campaign, corporations must manufacture various fictions—giving "soft money" to a national party, buying "issue" ads that do not directly endorse one candidate or "bundling" the donations of various company employees—to bypass regulations barring them from giving directly to candidates. In an inaugural, none of this sleight-of-hand is necessary. In 1993, Bill Clinton spent as much on his inauguration as he did pursuing the Democratic nomination, but no law required the White House to release who gave what, and until late November 1996, after revelations about last summer's campaign financing scandals, it did not.

The participation of business interests in the inaugural, while not unprecedented (in 1932, for example, Warner Brothers and General Electric sent a trainload of Hollywood stars to adorn Roosevelt's), has grown exponentially in recent years. The 1993 Clinton inaugural raised more from private donors than any in history, besting George Bush's record by $10 million. Bill Clinton gave considerable authority over his first to two of his best fund-raisers, Rahm Emanuel, who had served as the 1992 Clinton-Gore campaign finance director (see Roger Simon, "The Man Who Would Be George," page 17), and Ron Brown, chair of the Democratic National Committee. Between them, they brought in a staggering $42 million. This year, money people have also been given key inaugural posts. Terry McAuliffe, former DNC fund-raising whiz, is co-chair. The co-executive director is Debbie Willhite, who passed the time between the last inaugural and this one as a lobbyist at Black, Manafort, Stone & Kelly Public Affairs Co., where she described her work to *The National Journal* as that of a "maître d' ... I introduce folks to people in the administration they'd like to meet and vice versa."

Only a small portion of the money the Clintonites raised in 1993 came through direct financial contributions. The inaugural did collect more than $2.5 million in checks, from contributors like Federal Express ($100,000), Salomon Brothers ($50,000) and the AFL-CIO ($200,000), but more popular were in-kind gifts. In 1993, for instance, USAir provided the inaugural committee with $200,000 worth of free plane tickets to bring selected guests to Washington. Motorola outfitted the staff with $1.5 million in cell phones, pagers and two-way radios. Korbel champagne chipped in 800 cases of bubbly, worth $50,000. The big three auto makers offered the committee more than 500 cars, and Anheuser-Busch provided free beer. As committee spokesman Jay Ziegler effused to *The Boston Globe*, "When we need phones, we call AT&T and they donate them. When we need software, we call a software company. The participation is incredible." Many contributors said their assistance was

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simply a way of celebrating one of democracy's great rituals. But the gifts, which would have been illegal during a campaign, went largely to produce the balls, gala and dinners—essentially private events.

Through Harry and Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, the Arkansas FOBs who produced four sitcoms for CBS (and who spent inaugural night in the Lincoln bedroom), the committee got CBS to make an in-kind donation of its own. CBS charged the Clintons $875,000, less than half what ABC charged for the 1985 Reagan gala, according to *The Washington Post*, to broadcast the 1993 gala. As part of the deal, CBS even let the inaugural committee sell ads for the show, which the committee peddled to such stalwarts as Anheuser-Busch and Ford, for a total of $6.5 million.

But the presidential inaugural committee funds most of its work not through in-kind donations, but through ticket sales. In 1993 (and again in 1997), once it was established that invitees would not need them all, a small percentage of ball tickets were made available for public purchase. But the function of the $150 balls, and even more obviously of the $100-$3,000-a-person gala and the four $1,000-a-table dinners (the dinners have only been held in first terms) is to give campaign contributors another opportunity to dispense largesse and be recognized for it. In the first weeks after an election, state party chairmen, heads of friendly ethnic organizations, congressional leaders, prominent labor supporters and others are asked to provide lists of supporters whose campaign contributions deserve to be recognized. The various constituencies are then provided liaisons from the inaugural staff whose job is to make sure they are taken care of. As one official from a heavily contributing financial services company put it, "some guy called me up in December and said 'I'm your liaison—let me know what you need.' We made enough contributions so they're going to offer us tickets." Along with such solicitude, large donors win the opportunity to funnel substantial amounts of money to the inaugural committee. This year, for instance, the American Federation of Teachers plans to purchase 350 tickets to balls, 120 to the gala and 140 to the parade at the estimated cost of between $60,000 and $70,000. Until such groups have decided how many tickets they plan to buy, the inaugural ticketing office is directed to distract any hapless citizen who calls in wanting to attend the balls with enthusiastic discussions of the public inaugural events on the Mall. Asked last week about attending the even more exclusive gala, an inaugural committee staffer responded with a question of his own: "Do you know any powerful people, big donors, celebrities? They may have a ticket."

The ticket purchase scheme also provides much-needed window-dressing for inaugural big spending. In the wake of the Lippo scandal, Clinton pledged not to accept in-kind assistance or checks over $100 for the 1997 inaugural. It sounded like a real sacrifice. But since corporations and unions give money mostly through ticket purchases, not donations, that pledge will not prevent the committee from spending at least as much on this year's inaugural as it did in 1993. Ford Motor Com-

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pany, for instance, which in past years has lent cars to the inaugural committee for free, is this year charging for the 120-car fleet the committee will be using. But, according to a source familiar with the transaction, Ford plans to simply "recycle" the money into the purchase of tickets. (The Clintonites also began this year's fund-raising with a $9 million surplus from 1993, none of which, in a break with tradition, was donated to charity.)

In return for the money they send the inaugural committee's way, donors can hope to introduce or reintroduce themselves to administration officials. James Riady, who donated $100,000 to the 1993 inaugural, and brought fifteen friends with him to it, claims to have met with President Clinton in a private room at one of the balls. More common is for corporations to sponsor their own events and invite members of a new administration to whom they wish to cozy up. In 1989, Philip Morris hosted a bash in honor of Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter (who wielded authority over tobacco subsidies). And in 1993, the American Hospital Association, the American Nurses' Association, the American Association of Retired Persons and the American Health Care Association each lavished $10,000 on a parade-watching party to which it invited the Clintonites it suspected would play a role in the health care task force. This year, Bell Atlantic is picking up part of the cost for a party thrown by the Democratic National Committee; and Apple, whose co-founder, Steven Jobs, has been a conspicuous backer of the administration, is joining with a consortium of other high-tech companies to give a reception in the president's honor. Explaining the value of such events for donors, one entertainment executive explains, "it's a card for the Rolodex, a contact which people feel they can build on in coming months ... there's great business value in being part of the Washington orbit."

The fund-raising hustle is only one way in which contemporary inaugurals mimic, and outdo, the seamier side of presidential campaigns. Another is their instrumental use of manpower. The use of government staff in political campaigns is clearly restricted. But for years, the Department of Defense and the General Services Administration have provided the presidential inaugural committee (a private body) with drivers, medical teams and security guards (along with office space and ballrooms), often without reimbursement and, according to a 1987 General Accounting Office report, often without legal authority. The GAO reports that during the 1985 inaugural, the committee asked military personnel and their spouses to put together tables, assemble party favors, take tickets and even serve champagne at invitation-only balls. Officials of both the Department of Defense and the General Services Administration have complained about this lèse-majesté. But, as the report explained, the fact that "its [the presidential inaugural committee's] principal officers and employees were also key officials within the White House color[ed] PIC's requests with substantial political and governmental suasion."

More openly, inaugurals rely on hordes of the same idealistic, partisan, job-hungry twentysomethings who festoon the lower rungs of campaign organizations. Over the past two decades, these men and women have replaced local volunteers as the backbone of inaugural committees, using them as launching pads into White House employment. Or at least that's the theory. In practice, few inaugural workers ever get administration jobs, and many former staffers describe the experience as the closest thing to a sweatshop in American politics. For starters, there are the hours: at least eighteen a day. "I slept under my desk," says one 1993 staffer. "A presidential campaign pales by comparison," says a veteran of 1985. "I come in at 6 a.m. and usually leave around midnight," says Paul Yendura, the gay and lesbian outreach coordinator for this year's inaugural.

Then there's the work. Here's how one former ticket office staffer describes her job, "I was coordinating lists of invitees [totaling perhaps 300,000], making sure we didn't send the same two invitations to one person. Some people had middle initials inputted and others didn't, and some names were misspelled. The computers didn't catch that, so we did it by hand." And the conditions. The Navy Yard, which housed the 1993 inaugural committee building, was, in the words of one staffer, "in the middle of a terrible section of town. I was scared for my safety." And the building itself. "One day some caterers made some lemonade with water from one of the taps on the wall. The water wasn't fit for human consumption and everyone got sick. A bunch of people were hospitalized." The building is now being demolished.

All that might be tolerable, of course, if the expected jobs materialized. But for the bulk of the inaugural staff, the president's swearing-in means unemployment. "At a certain point it dawned on people they were in the wrong place to get an administration job," says a 1993 staffer. "The best place was the transition team in Little Rock, the second was the transition in Washington, inaugural was third.... Two weeks away from the inaugural, everyone realized that very few people were getting jobs. Panic set in. It was one of the least pleasant things I had ever witnessed." As archivist Philip Brooks recalls wistfully, "There were probably one out of twenty jobs to go around. I always found it rather sad to watch those young people who came expecting they'd get jobs. They waited and waited and waited for the call to come and it never came." To add insult to injury, junior inaugural staffers even run into difficulty compensating themselves with free passes to the balls. "Absolutely no one worked their way into free tickets," says one 1993 staffer.

Still, what work on the inaugural committee lacks in perks, it makes up for in disillusioning exposure to the inner workings of American politics. If inaugurals were once simple and tasteful, today they're four-day, money-driven extravaganzas. And while this excess is hyped as a celebration of democracy, don't tell that to the inaugural staffers. "I don't think I'd easily be able to get myself on a list for tickets," sighs a current one. "But then again," she says, brightening, "I wouldn't want to go hang out with a bunch of lobbyists anyway." •

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THE HARD QUESTIONS

Anti-social Security

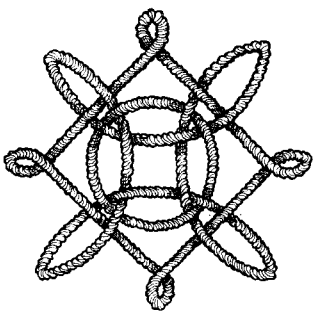
Labor leaders and some Democrats are worried about a proposal they fear could signal the beginning of the end of Social Security as we know it. The proposal comes from the Advisory Council on Social Security, a federal panel appointed to suggest ways to keep the system solvent once the baby-boom generation retires. Some council members endorsed a plan that amounts to privatizing part of the system. They would cut guaranteed benefits but allow individuals to try to make up the difference by investing a portion of their payroll taxes in the stock market through personal retirement accounts. Those who invested wisely might do better than today's Social Security recipients; those who invested badly might do worse.

Critics, including New York Democratic Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, argue that privatizing even part of Social Security violates the principle that the nation as a whole is responsible for assuring a decent retirement income for all workers. Some also fear that once employees begin to think of their payroll taxes as investments for their own retirement, rather than as contributions to a national social insurance program, pressure will grow to divert more tax revenues into the personal accounts; the government-guaranteed benefits would decline and public support for the redistributive aspect of Social Security would be lost. Only poor retirees would retain a stake in the system, which would begin to look more and more like welfare.

Critics are right to worry that privatizing part of Social Security could be the first step in dismantling a popular government program long thought immune to anti-government sentiment. But why is Social Security, the greatest success of the American welfare state, vulnerable to the slippery slope of privatization? Because from the start, the founders of Social Security themselves sold the system as a kind of private insurance scheme and failed to build the social solidarity it required. The political vulnerability of the American welfare state can be traced to the shallow moral foundation on which it was built.

Those who believe the nation has a responsibility to provide a decent level of health, education and welfare for its citizens, regardless of their ability to pay, can defend this idea in two different ways. They can argue that the nation is a community of citizens engaged in a common project that entails certain mutual responsibilities. Or they can argue that, whether or not we share a strong sense of national community, we should respect the right of persons to live the lives they choose and provide the material prerequisites that genuine choice requires.

Since social solidarity has always been difficult to inspire in the U.S., architects of the American welfare state, unlike the social democrats of Europe, sought to legitimate their project in individualistic terms. When Franklin Roosevelt proposed the Social Security Act (enacted in 1935) he did not rest his case on a communal ethic. Instead, he carefully designed the Social Security system to resemble a private insurance system, funded by payroll contributions, rather than general tax revenues.



In doing so, Roosevelt encouraged Americans to think of their payroll taxes as being held in trust for their own retirement, not as funding the retirement of fellow citizens. In retrospect, it is easy to see how this rationale lent itself to present-day proposals to privatize Social Security through personal investment accounts. If we are only saving for our own retirement, then why not invest the money ourselves, as we do with 401(k) plans?

At the time, Roosevelt's rationale seemed a clever concession to the anti-government, individualistic ethos that resisted any policy with redistributive consequences. As Roosevelt later acknowledged, the payroll tax mechanism was "politics all the way through. We put those payroll contributions there so as to give the contributors a legal, moral, and political right to collect their pensions and their unemployment benefits. With those taxes in there, no damn politician can ever scrap my Social Security program."

In 1944, in his last State of the Union address, Roosevelt laid out an agenda for the further development of the welfare state. He called for "an economic bill of rights," including the right to remunerative work, to food, to clothing and housing, to medical care and education, to security in old age. For Roosevelt, these rights did not depend for their justification on strong notions of communal obligation but instead on the idea that "necessitous men are not free men." Certain material conditions were prerequisites for "true individual freedom."

In advancing the rationale for the Great Society, Lyndon Johnson drew, to a greater extent than Roosevelt, on the ideal of national community. In a metaphor that would recur in Democratic rhetoric for a generation, Johnson described the nation as "a family" that "takes care of all its members in time of adversity," its people "bound together by common ties of confidence and affection." For the most part, however, Johnson echoed Roosevelt's argument that economic security is necessary to individual choice. Accepting the 1964 Democratic nomination, he defended the welfare state in the name of enabling persons to choose their own ends: "For more than thirty years, from Social Security to the war against poverty, we have diligently worked to enlarge the freedom of man. And as a result, Americans tonight are freer to live as they want to live, to pursue their ambitions, to meet their desires ... than at any time in all of our glorious history."

For Johnson, as for Roosevelt, the individualistic mode of argument reflected the pressure to answer the conservative claim that the welfare state violated individual freedom. Barry Goldwater, Johnson's 1964 opponent, argued that any program that taxed the rich to help the poor amounted to coerced charity: "How can a man be truly free ... if the fruits of his labor are not his to dispose of, but are treated, instead, as part of a common pool of public wealth?" Redistributive worries aside, the economist Milton Friedman objected to Social Security on the grounds that compelling persons to contribute even to their own retirement was unjust paternalism: "If a man knowingly prefers to live for today, to use his resources for current enjoyment, deliberately choosing a penurious old age, by what right do we prevent him from doing so?"

Paradoxically, even the personal retirement accounts favored by today's conservatives as an alternative to Social Security would be condemned by Friedman's argument. If people should be free to decide what risks to take with their retirement savings, why should they not also be free to decide to save nothing at all? The answer is that the nation as a whole shares responsibility for the present and future well-being of its citizens, whatever their income or foresight or skill at picking stocks. But if this is the case, liberals as well as conservatives need a political discourse that reaches beyond the individualistic ethic. The case for a decent measure of public provision depends on the things we share as well as the things we choose.

MICHAEL J. SANDEL

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Neocon v. Theocon: An Exchange

To the editors:

Is America a great country, or what? At first I thought Jacob Heilbrunn's piece ("Neocon v. Theocon," December 30) was the loopiest and most bigoted anti-Catholic piece I had read in years and, further, that it was evil in its express intent to foment Jewish-Catholic division—where there was none. Later, I realized that the real animus moving him was to sting several neoconservative Jews, whom he has attacked before (and no doubt will again). This is not the right country in which to be too sensitive. The minute you think you are the victim, at last, it turns out that the intended target was somebody else.

Look. It was wrong of Jacob Heilbrunn to write that Thomism "is un-American." Especially when, in the context, he meant Catholic social teaching. Doubly so since he again and again misstates what Thomism actually holds—on elementary matters such as natural law—and who the players are, and the relations among them, and what they actually have said. Triply so when he writes that Germain Grisez, of all people, is the godfather of all Thomists and the snitcher on Charles Curran at Catholic University (which Grisez emphatically denies). Quadruply when he lists Alan Keyes as the public voice of Thomism rather than, as he is, one of the keenest Catholic students of Leo Strauss. And it gets worse. One hardly knows whether to laugh or to cry, and it hurts too much to be much more than guttural.

But the main point Heilbrunn wants to make is clear enough: some Jewish neoconservatives have erred in working ecumenically on the cultural and moral crisis in American culture, seeing merit in some points made by evangelical Christians and Catholics against secular elites (and criticizing others). They should have known, he ends, just after quoting from Richard Neuhaus, that they were giving aid to the devil.

Now I doubt if in all America there is a citizen who has been more publicly committed, year in and year out, to open conversation with those of faiths different from his than Richard John Neuhaus. No Christian has worked more closely and seriously with Jews; no Lutheran (for such he was most of his life) extended himself more to other groups of Protestants, Catholics and secularists. In Neuhaus, there is not a shred of anti-Semitism nor of any other antagonism, and in moral and intellectual *seriousness* (with him, the word comes with italics) he has few, if any, equals. He doesn't even like sports (a worrisome fault).

Furthermore, if there is one thing that Neuhaus is not, it is a Thomist. Like most Lutherans, he grew up with a deep love for Augustine and a profound suspicion of, almost tangible distaste for, Thomistic discourse. Again, I would be amazed if Neuhaus learned anything about political philosophy from Germain Grisez, to whom Heilbrunn attributes both a Thomism and an influence that will amaze most Catholic intellectuals, left or right.

But let us come to the point, hidden by Heilbrunn behind so many errors of context. Heilbrunn is putatively discussing a rift in conservative ranks that was occasioned by a symposium of five articles and a longish editorial introduction in the November issue of *First Things*, a journal that, since Neuhaus launched it just seven years ago, has rapidly become the premier religious monthly in the nation, with a circulation of 30,000. Its reputation is that it is the most sophisticated journal of religion in the country, open and ecumenical, exactly on the cutting edge of the cultural issues wracking all free societies today.

One of these five articles was written by a Protestant (Charles Colson), one by a Jew (Hadley Arkes), two by Catholics (Russell Hittinger and Robert George) and one by Robert Bork (who does not here, or anywhere else that I know of, discuss his personal religious/secular views). Is this a Thomist cabal? Can it be called exclusively, or even chiefly, Catholic? In at least four of the five essays, including Hittinger's, there is not a single line that springs from or depends on Catholic faith.

By themselves each of the five essays makes impressive points about the judicial usurpation of power, the true theme of the symposium. Many writers have talked about the alienation of the electorate in recent years; here was an analysis of considerable variety and depth about some of its awesome dimensions.

The editorial introduction, however, changed the subject from judicial usurpation, about which the symposiasts offered much evidence, to "The End of Democracy?", about which they said democracy is still our best hope but there is a serious problem with the courts frustrating it. Several of the essays discussed the damage done to democracy under the steady assault of improperly imposed rulings. But, in the end, attachment to democracy was recommended by all so that the question raised in the title of the symposium, "The End of Democracy?", was overwrought. Further, the introduction used the terms "regime" and "legitimacy," everyday parlance in university government departments, in ways bound to cause misunderstandings among non-academics. These were immediately flagged by persons close to the magazine (that was the nub of the controversy); and the editors took pains to correct these misuses in the next available issue, in January. Finally, the editors made most unfortunate use of Nazi practices as a warning to Americans of what could happen here, beginning with widespread acceptance of euthanasia and abortion. The Nazi example is simply too explosively horrific, and evokes far too many ugly echoes, to be effective in moral argument; it seems almost sacrilegious to use it homiletically. While "never again" does imply "watch out for small beginnings," the last group to use this tactic frequently in the U.S., the New Left, left behind sour memories.

Still, my own first description to someone who asked me about the Heilbrunn article was that it was "evil," and this word leapt spontaneously to my lips because of the way in which Heilbrunn huffed and puffed to foment conflict between Christians (particularly Catholics) and Jews, where none existed. Heilbrunn portrayed the neoconservatives in this rift as mostly Jewish, and cites in evidence the resignations from *First Thing*'s two editorial boards of Gertrude Himmelfarb, Peter Berger and Walter Berns. But two of these three happen to be Protestants. Because I have worked with Neuhaus for thirty years, I recognized the editorial as a momentary stumble. It marked an uncharacteristic false note, an untimely note of utopian radicalism, and stepped away from the traditional Aristotelian view of the centrality of prudence in natural law thinking. It was the *opposite* of a Thomist note.

The second thing that pushed the word "evil" to my lips—I did not mean by this that it was deliberate or malicious, only pernicious in its effect—was its attribution to the Catholics mentioned of a view that none of them share: "In their view, the United States is first and foremost a Christian nation." Heilbrunn cannot find this view in any of the writers in the symposium in *First Things*—not there nor in any other of their writings. Heilbrunn might like to read the statement on religious liberty from the Second Vatican Council (1961-65) to catch up with the view of pluralism that is normative for Catholic teaching. He might also like to read the writings of the two Catholic symposiasts, Robert George and Russell Hittinger, on religious freedom and civil liberties. They and Neuhaus hold that the United States is not a Christian nation but a pluralistic nation, with no established church and respecting the freedom of religion; and that this is a great boon for Catholics. Not a one of them is a theocrat. All believe in the inviolability of personal conscience, a princi-

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ple of Thomism that led Lord Acton to call St. Thomas the first Whig.

Contrary to Heilbrunn, not all natural law theorists are Catholics, and natural law thinking is as American as apple—well, as the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson, for example, labored nights to prepare a text of the New Testament (in four languages), accepting only the "philosophical" passages, not the miraculous or religious ones, for meditation on the universal moral code known to all humans, inscribed by the Creator in every human mind.

Now Heilbrunn may not find this approach to "the laws of nature and nature's God" very much to his liking; many highly educated Americans do not. But is it quite sporting of him to call that way of thinking "not so much anti-American, as un-American"? Does he really want to set up a Journalistic Un-American Activities Committee, to separate Catholics from the professions or any other place of influence, so that they might learn their place as second-class citizens? I think not. Besides, I suspect from several of his passages that what he really is afraid of is evangelical Protestants. It is they whom he most patronizes, speaking of them as if, if they are to amount to anything, they need to be tutored either by Jews or by Catholics. It is not attractive that Heilbrunn thinks of them as the hand of the devil. His cover, that he is merely one Jew accusing other Jews of political cynicism, isn't persuasive to those in the line of fire. Demonizing others is illiberal, and so is sowing religious animosity.

MICHAEL NOVAK

To the editors:

As a theist and a conservative, I have no objection to Jacob Heilbrunn's labeling me a "theocon." I do object, though, to his attributing to me views I have never advanced or defended, do not hold and, in some cases, deeply deplore. Heilbrunn falsely—and gratuitously—associates me with the silly and obnoxious belief that the idea upon which America is founded is "Christianity." What I actually hold is that America's founding ideals of liberty and equality, though perfectly compatible with Christian faith, are equally compatible with Jewish and other non-Christian beliefs. In my view, Americans of all faiths rightly enjoy full citizenship and participate in political life on terms of strict equality.

Heilbrunn's basic story is that "the mostly Jewish neoconservatives" are alarmed that a group of increasingly influential "Catholic Thomists" is attempting to impose religious dogma in the name of the Constitution. Purporting to provide some evidence for this charge, he quotes me as saying in *First Things* that the natural law doctrine of the necessary conformity of civil law to moral truth "long predates the rise of democracy. It ... was given careful, systematic expression by St. Thomas Aquinas. It has been a central feature of the tradition of papal social teaching." Notice the ellipses. Heilbrunn has carefully edited out my observation that this doctrine is rooted in the thought of Plato and Aristotle. To force my words to fit his story line, Heilbrunn permits only the references to Catholic authorities to appear in the quotation.

Contrary to what Heilbrunn suggests, the philosophical doctrine I invoked in *First Things* is, as I said there, "shared by people of different faiths and of no particular faith. It is the premise of any serious conception of human rights." It figures centrally and explicitly in Martin Luther King's defense of civil disobedience in the "Letter from Birmingham Jail"—his most important contribution to American political thought. Citing Aquinas, among others, King condemned segregation laws and other policies of racial discrimination as contrary to "natural law." Was the great Protestant civil rights leader an "un-American" Thomist? A crypto-Catholic? A proto-theocon?

Friends who know Jacob Heilbrunn assure me that there is in him neither malice nor bigotry, that his are errors of ignorance and, uncharacteristically (they insist), ineptitude. Still, what he has written about me and other Catholics is not only untrue but unjust.

ROBERT GEORGE

Jacob Heilbrunn replies:

Now that they have dropped the complaint of bigotry, the main charge of Michael Novak and other conservative critics is that my essay amounts to an exercise in fantasy—an evil fantasy that lumps all American Catholics into one Thomist bin. In my zeal to tweak the neoconservatives, I have invented an entire intellectual war between them and the theocons, between followers of Leo Strauss and of Aquinas, between Jews and Catholics.

To expose my bungling, Novak first presents a catalog of errors: Germain Grisez, whose influence I grossly exaggerate, is no Thomist; the contributors to the *First Things* symposium were not all Catholics; Alan Keyes is really a follower of Leo Strauss. None of this is quite right. I cited Grisez not only because he stands for what amounts to a premodern version of Catholicism influenced by Aquinas, but also because, as Robert George points out in the first sentence of his essay "Natural Law and Human Nature," Grisez has had considerable influence among a small band of philosophers. Certainly my article referred to a school of Aquinas, but "theocon" was intended to apply more broadly to both the evangelicals and the Catholics who contributed to the *First Things* symposium. It's true that Keyes began as a Straussian at Harvard, but he now espouses with particular brio a Thomist understanding of American democracy.

But this is small beer. What really exercises both Novak and Robert George is my reference to Thomism itself as "un-American." Perhaps "non-American" would have been more apposite. Putting Thomism into the Constitution, in my view, is as "un" or "non" American as putting the Talmud into it. My point was not that any religious doctrine or school of thought was in itself un-American, but that religion does not belong in the Constitution. The ellipses that George points to are not significant: throughout my essay, I emphasized that Aquinas and Aristotle cannot be reconciled. As the Straussian Harry V. Jaffa pointed out in his superb 1952 book *Thomism and Aristotelianism*, a neo-Thomist movement existed in the academy that "might be better described as secular Thomism, because within its ranks are some who accept the authority of Thomas' philosophy but do not necessarily adhere to his theological doctrines. Nevertheless it is important to remember that the movement is Catholic in inspiration.... But a very grave problem exists as to whether the Aristotle that is seen wholly through the eyes of Thomas is the same as the one who composed the original treatises."

Novak and George strenuously deny that Richard John Neuhaus, the editor of *First Things*, is after a Christian nation. Perhaps they're right. But the inflammatory language that George and the other contributors employed in their essays, coupled with Neuhaus's introduction and other statements, do not entirely set one at ease. Novak may think that *First Things* is a model of rational discussion, but I would venture that, with an editor who in his writings refers to liberals, professors and homosexuals as "aliens among us," a rather different tone prevails at the magazine.

In no way did I suggest that any of these sentiments make Neuhaus an anti-Semite. What I did suggest was that these beliefs, allied with those of some evangelical Christians, pose a threat to the neutrality embodied in the First Amendment and, hence, to Jews (as well as secularists). It is to that threat that the neoconservative intellectuals such as Norman Podhoretz, Midge Decter and Gertrude Himmelfarb finally reacted. Novak criticizes me for "demonizing others." I didn't say that Father Neuhaus and his fellow contributors were giving "aid and comfort to the bomb throwers among us." Norman Podhoretz did. •

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Marcellino

The obituaries for Marcello Mastroianni that I saw mentioned some of his roles (a few of those notices did *not* use the phrase "Latin lover"), and they noted admiringly, even affectionately, that he was one of the few foreign male stars to win international fame. But the obituaries omitted one rather relevant fact: he was a magnificent actor.

This omission was partly his own fault. Mastroianni disliked arty posturing; he liked to feed the press disparaging remarks about himself, just to puncture conventional hype. (The headline on *The New York Times* obit called him a "Self-Deprecating Charmer." Try to think of another important actor to whom that phrase could possibly apply.) He once told an interviewer that he'd had a dream in which all the producers of his films realized that they had been bamboozled and descended on him to get their money back; and he said, "Ha, ha! I've spent it all!" But his dislike of pretentiousness couldn't keep some of us from taking him as seriously as he must, privately, have taken his work—in more than 120 films.

I first saw him on stage, in Visconti's 1956 production of *Death of a Salesman*, in Rome. Mastroianni played Biff (pronounced Beef), and although there was a touch of marinara in this Brooklyn young man, he was outstanding. He had already done several theater roles for Visconti—"I discovered him," the director once boasted to me—in Shakespeare and Goldoni and Chekhov. The first time I saw Mastroianni on screen was in a comedy called *Too Bad She's Bad*. He is a hardworking Roman taxi driver who falls in love with Sophia Loren, discovers that she's the daughter of a professional thief, Vittorio De Sica, then sets out to reform her and her whole family. Delightful.

By then Mastroianni had become someone to watch. But more: the films that came along in those extraordinary years soon marked him as a phenomenon. When postwar Italy produced its great wave of scintillating film directors, it also produced an actor who could serve those directors with a wide range of Italian experience that evoked response throughout the world. In the course of his career Mastroianni also made films in Britain, America, Greece, Brazil and France. But it was as an Italian that he shone.

Think of his range of characters: one of the birdbrained burglars in *Big Deal on Madonna Street*; the novelist at the existentialist bottom in *La Notte*; in *A Special Day* a harassed but courageous homosexual in Mussolini's Italy. In 1960 he became, one may say, Fellini's vicar in *La Dolce Vita*, continuing with *8½*, *City of Women*, *Ginger and Fred*. For De Sica he explored the rooster element of Italian maleness in *Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow* and *Marriage Italian Style*.

Some of the films in his life—more than some, actually, but who wants to be overly rigorous at a time like this?—he probably accepted just because he wanted to keep working and they were the best available scripts. But lately and gratefully I saw again one of his best. The Film Society of Lincoln Center has just run a retrospective of Mario Monicelli's work at the Walter Reade, including his masterpiece, *The Organizer*. (The original title is better—*I Compagni. The Comrades.*) It's a story of labor struggles in Turin around 1900, centering on a textile factory. Workers' unrest is smoldering there because of the fourteen-hour day, with one half-hour break. Mastroianni tumbles off a freight train, a scruffy, bearded, itinerant socialist professor, who lost his teaching job because he is an agitator and now travels from one trouble spot to another. Comical as a scratcher and moocher, unshakable as a man committed to principles of justice, and quite conscious of both qualities, he brings the incipient workers' unrest to a blaze by organizing a strike.

In his key scene, he is informed belatedly, after thirty-one days of the strike, that the workers are weakening, are voting to call off the strike. He is in his long underwear when he learns of this meeting, throws on some clothes and grabs a bicycle to rush there and save the strike. (The comic element.) He arrives just in time to rally the workers—not only to continue the strike but to occupy the factory. (The evangelist element.) Anyone who has seen *The Organizer* will treasure the whole film, and Mastroianni's whole performance, but this scene in itself shatters the argument that first-rank acting, large in every way, is not possible on screen.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Hamlet. *Kenneth Branagh adapted and directed—and stars in a generally fine cast. The production sometimes strains for novelty and effect but is nonetheless engrossing. (Reviewed 1/27/97)* **One Fine Day.** *A 1930s screwball comedy in 1990s dress, and faring well. Michelle Pfeiffer and George Clooney as the couple who, of course, fight when they meet and get to know each other better. (1/20/97)* **The Portrait of a Lady.** *Henry James at the service of the feminist Jane Campion. Yet this account of a young American woman, encountering Europe a century ago, has rewards even in this version. (12/23/96)* **Some Mother's Son.** *Helen Mirren and Fionnula Flanagan as the mothers of two IRA sons in the hunger strike of 1981. Inevitably partisan, but inevitably moving. (12/30/96)* **—SK**

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With actors who mean much to us over the years, a nearly personal bond develops. When someone told me—at a screening, aptly enough—that the news of Mastroianni's death had just been announced on the radio, I suddenly felt sad. Bereaved. I thought of him not in any of his roles, but in Fellini's *Intervista*, the autobiographical fantasy-documentary made in 1987 in which he and Mastroianni play around together, two old friends and collaborators, full of an admiration for each other that doesn't need to be spoken. Throughout their scenes Fellini calls him "Marcellino." Like many many others, I'm sure, I realized that, without knowing it, I had been calling him Marcellino for years.

A breeze of mockery in the press preceded **Evita** (Hollywood) because it was being promoted in shops as a source of fashion—the Evita look. But the Evita look turns out to be the picture's chief (small) interest.

The original musical, by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, was hardly a full account of the life and character of Eva Perón, but it had some edge, some sense of theatrical adventure. The film is limp. A peculiar limpness, too, the result of a conflict between flat sequences and others that make the flatness worse by trying to slash and bustle—and all of them portentously lighted. History is something that the film climbs aboard once in a while, which is how we learn the status of the Perón fortunes, up or down, and always without explanation.

Madonna, as you may have heard, is Evita. She can sing, though there are too many times when she asks her country not to cry for her. She can't act. This was clear on stage in Mamet's *Speed-the-Plow*, and has been confirmed in films since. She does have an amusing brazen personality, as she showed in her biographical documentary, *Truth or Dare*, but it's not evident here. The Madonna of that documentary was more Evita than she is in *Evita*.

Jonathan Pryce, so memorable as Lytton Strachey in *Carrington*, is present as Perón, but is virtually invisible. His past has been written (accurately, I've read) as a device that Evita picks up when needed, then puts aside. A much lesser actor could have done all that Pryce is asked to do.

Antonio Banderas plays the role that is called Che (for Che Guevara) in the program but who is never addressed by name. He functions as a sort of Everyman chorus who turns up in various guises at different times to comment on proceedings. Banderas's charm, undiminished here, throws the picture out of whack. He's much more appealing than Madonna. •

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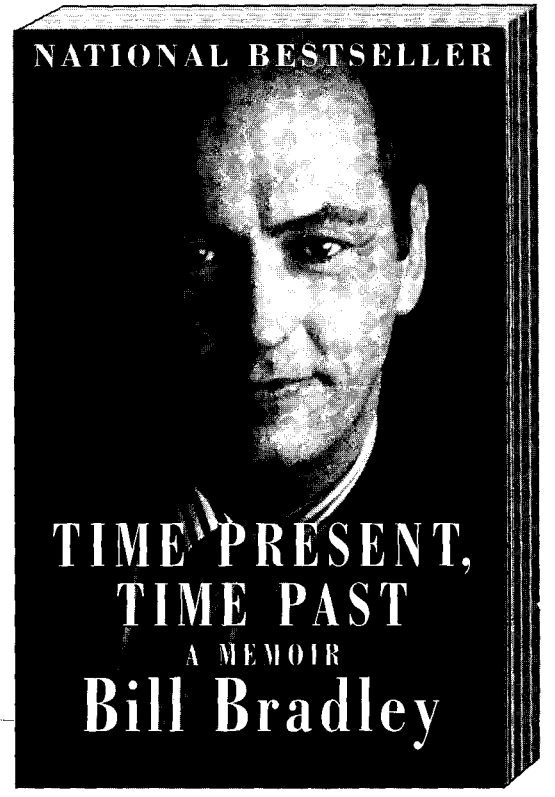

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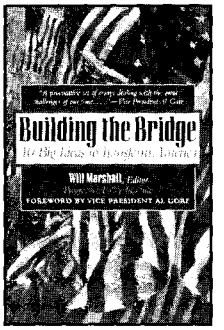

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The Perfect European

By Alfred Kazin

Independent Spirit: Essays by Hubert Butler edited by Elisabeth Sifton

(Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 588 pp., $35)

It was Joseph Brodsky's admiration for Hubert Butler's writing that led to the publication of these selections from Butler's books and essays. I can see what excited Brodsky. Butler, who died in 1991 at the age of 90, was an Irish Protestant descended from the old Anglo-Irish caste that until recently supplied most of Ireland's greatest writers and many of its most fervent patriots. Butler was as protective of his Irish cultural heritage as Brodsky was of his Russian background.

This man who, with the Quakers, helped Jews to get out of Vienna in 1938 was a devoted student of Irish antiquities and legends. Many of the great Anglo-Irish estates were burned during the Irish Civil War by partisans of the Irish Republican Army who would not accept partition. (The Anglo-Irish little resemble the pugnacious Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of Ulster, who outnumber the local Catholics and so can remain part of Britain and are determined to remain so forever.) There has been a steady erosion of the old Irish Protestantism that once accounted for 11 percent of the country's population and now accounts for only 2.5 percent. The greatest literary tradition in Ireland (until now) was the Anglo-Irish from Swift to Yeats and O'Casey, and it may have ended with Beckett. Unlike Shaw and Wilde, Butler refused to settle in England. He rejoiced in what Wolfe Tone, the old eighteenth-century Catholic rebel against England, had called "the common name of Irishman."

The Butlers and their aristocratic forebears had been in Ireland since the thirteenth century. Butler's Protestant individualism was now up against clericalism and nationalism that had turned violent and compulsive, as everywhere in the twentieth century. He mocked the way the old pre-Christian tribal deities had been elevated into Ireland's "two thousand saints." Protestants such as Standish O'Grady, John Synge and Douglas Hyde (a future president of Ireland) helped bring about the literary revival of Gaelic at the end of the nineteenth century; and Butler observed scathingly in 1987 that "40,000 Irish leave every year, cursing their elders who forced them to learn Irish." In "The Invader Wore Slippers," Butler dryly described the many ways in which the population of the Channel Islands, occupied by the Nazis in 1940, happily cooperated with the Nazis. They were relieved that their police and local bodies were left in place (to accept Nazi orders), relieved that they could still pray for the royal family; the dispatch of Jews to death camps was overlooked. Butler emphasizes this largely unknown chapter of the war because he thinks that the Germans would have occupied neutral Ireland just as comfortably.

The first part of Butler's extraordinary book is full of his devotion to local history and the preservation of landscape in his ancestral Kilkenny. Even in the small Irish Republic (the population is now 3.5 million), there was a growing indifference to the antiquities that brought foreign archaeologists to peck at the land whose pre-Christian history in outlying districts was as fascinating to science as it had been to those (such as Yeats) obsessed with the richness of Irish mythology. Butler thinks that Ireland is religiously more credulous than it used to be because it is more nationalistic than it used to be.

> But why should it be undermining to our morals or bruising to our national pride if one were to argue that the Irish saints were many of them the tribal gods of a gentle and intelligent people, whose racial origins retreat so far into history that to use national terms for them, Celt, Iberian, Gaulish, would not be easy? I was brought up in the diocese of St. Canice, but the less I believed in him, the more I was fascinated by him. He covered five Irish counties and as many Scottish and Welsh ones with his churches and miracles.... He is a link between the medieval world and the one that is immemorially old.

Butler's Protestantism emphasizes the right to private judgment, and he certainly brings that right into full play when he goes into the murderous religious history in what was Yugoslavia. To his old-fashioned classical education at Oxford, his excellent French and German, Butler added Russian, while teaching English in Leningrad, and Serbo-Croatian, while doing research in Yugoslavia. In a Zagreb newspaper in 1942, he read that Ireland, with Croatia and Slovakia, was to be one of three model "allied" states in German Europe. *In other Nazi papers "there was much of* flattering intent about the common loyalty of Croats and Irish to Faith and Fatherland." Irish Catholicism was in no position to extirpate its non-Catholic neighbors, but Croatia under the leadership of the Fascist Ante Pavelitch set out to murder the schismatic Serbs whom it could not convert to Roman Catholicism, and toiled so totally toward this end that even the Germans and Italians, who had established the little Croatian state, were amazed by so much killing.

Pavelitch, "a desk murderer like Himmler," had masterminded the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia and French Foreign Minister Louis Barthou by the pro-Nazi Ustashe. He became leader in 1940 of the puppet state of Independent Croatia. Butler sees in Pavelitch "the epitome, the personification, of the extraordinary alliance of religion and crime which for four years made Croatia the model for all satellite states in German Europe." He was so devout that he attended Mass each morning with his family in a private chapel built onto his house. Leaders of all the churches, including the Orthodox, expressed their loyalty to him. He gave them medals and enriched their parishes with the plundered property of the schismatics. Butler writes: "And he applied the simple creed of One Faith, One Fatherland, with a literalness that makes the heart stand still." The equation had to be "solved in blood." Almost 2 million Orthodox were offered the alternatives of death or conversion to the faith of the majority.

When Butler came to read the newspaper files in Zagreb, he felt that "a whole vocabulary of Christian goodness had blown inside out like an umbrella in a thunderstorm." In the spring of 1941, after the Germans had bombed Belgrade on Palm Sunday, a paper published the King's speech describing the terror of the women and children who were machine-gunned by low-flying planes as they fled from their homes. The following day the Germans in Panzer divisions arrived in Zagreb, and the same paper announced that "God's providence in concord with the resolve of our allies has brought it about that today on the eve of the resurrection

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of the Son of God our Independent Croatian State is also resurrected ... all that is right and true in Christianity stands on the side of the Germans!"

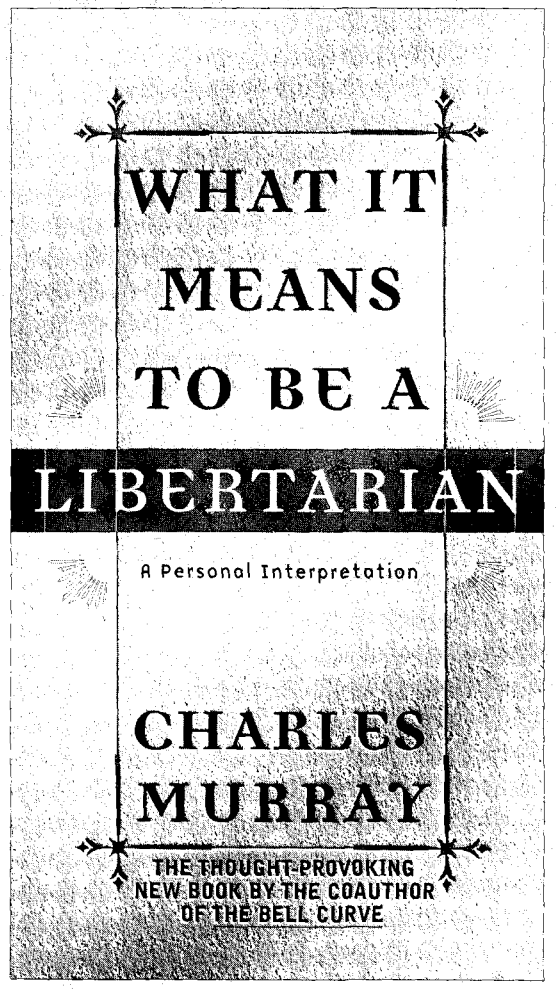
The Franciscan monks in Croatia were avid supporters of the Ustashe killers, and seem to have done much killing themselves. Two hundred and eighty-nine mass graves were eventually discovered at the Ustashe concentration camp of Jasenovac in Croatia. At Trsat, Father Ignacije, the guardian, and three friars received minor decorations from Pavelitch "for their long and selfless toil on behalf of the Croatian people." Reading the files of old newspapers issued in the Occupation period, particularly church newspapers, Butler was "wholly unprepared for the gush of hysterical adulation which was poured forth by almost all the leading clergy upon Pavelitch, who was probably the vilest of all war criminals.... He was the restorer of their nation and the Christian faith, a veritable hero of olden time." In his book *Kaputt*, Curzio Malaparte says that when he visited Pavelitch he found in his study what he took to be a basket of shelled oysters. Pavelitch explained that they were forty pounds of human eyes sent to him by his soldiers, who were crusading among the Serbs. Malaparte (a German writing under this pen name) was a publicity hound, but imagine making up such a story!

When the Croatian state collapsed, Pavelitch, with his equally horrible Interior Minister, Andrija Artukovitch, first obtained refuge in Austria. They were arrested by the British in Salzburg, released "after a mysterious intervention" and hid in monasteries. Pavelitch fled to Rome disguised as a Spanish priest. Artukovitch, thanks to a professor of theology traveling on a Vatican passport, was befriended by Franciscans in Switzerland. With their help he got to Ireland, under an assumed name, with his family, and he settled, with an Irish identity card, in California.

In 1950 Orthodox Serbs in exile sent a memorandum to the Fifth Assembly of the United Nations urging it to implement its resolution of December, 1946 which had branded genocide a crime against international law. They asked that its member states take into custody 120 Croat nationals. On the list was an Archbishop, and many Franciscans mentioned him by name. A Franciscan had been commandant of Jasenovac, the worst and the biggest of the concentration camps for Serbs and Jews. The man had personally taken part in murdering the prisoners. The Franciscan monastery of Shiroki Brieg in Herzegovina had been a center for the forced conversions and massacres. In 1942, a young man who had been a law student at the college and a member of the Crusaders, a Catholic organization, had won a prize in a competition for the slaughter of the Orthodox by cutting the throats of 1,360 Serbs with a special knife. The prize was a gold watch, a silver service, a roast suckling pig and some wine.

"How can this be true?" Butler writes in horror, recalling a hero of Auschwitz, the Polish Franciscan Father Kolbe. (Butler seems not to have known that Kolbe was also an extreme anti-Semite.) But it *was* true. As early as 1942, the French Cardinal Tisserant told Pavelitch's representative at the Vatican that "I know for sure that even the Franciscans of Bosnia-Herzegovina behaved atrociously. Father Shimitch, with a revolver in his hand, led an armed gang and destroyed Orthodox churches." The Ustashe ambassador to Rome had been received by many cardinals and managed to confuse them about the murders of Serbs. One powerful Italian cardinal, Ruffini, was a vigorous supporter and protector of the Ustashe. Only Cardinal Tisserant and Monsignor Montini, the future Paul VI, clearly understood what was going on. The Irish clerics seem either to have been totally befuddled or afraid to take a stand.

The only thing preventing life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is the government created to protect them.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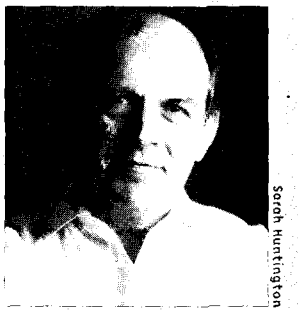
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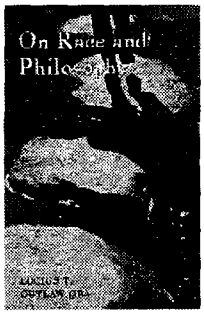

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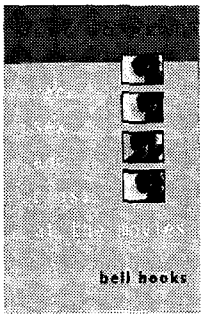

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Elisabeth Sifton, the editor of this book, appropriately finds Butler's valedictory in "The Children of Drancy," Butler's unforgettable essay on the 4,051 Jewish children who were sent off, in August 1942, to be killed in Poland from the transit camp at Drancy, north of Paris. Reviewing the glib assurances of the literary Luddites that the Holocaust can be ascribed to technology, Butler says:

> I am less frightened of science than I am of that doctrine of the Mystery of Iniquity, which is to many the only consolation left now that there is no traffic on the road to Brook Farm, and New Harmony is sealed off. The Mystery of Iniquity has its roots in despair, but wickedness would no longer be mysterious if the chains of responsibility were shorter.... It's not a coincidence that two small countries, Denmark and Bulgaria, stemmed the flow to Auschwitz better than any of their more powerful neighbors on the continent. Apart from size the two countries have nothing in common.

Does this appreciation of small countries contain Butler's own country? All I know is that, great as the Irish literary genius has been, it took an Irishman to make the perfect European.

ALFRED KAZIN's new book, *God and the American Writer*, will be published later this year by Knopf.

How the Jews of Russia outwitted themselves to death.

By Their Own Hands

BY RUTH R. WISSE

I.

Like the blackened snows of winter, the dissolution of the Soviet Union exposes so much dirt that it is hard to summon up even a glimmer of the original Communist ideal. Materially and morally, Russia looks like an experiment in ugliness, as if engineers had been competing for seventy years to see how much damage they could do to communities and families and individuals, to a society and an economy. How is one going to explain to the young that otherwise intelligent and even decent people were once prepared to condemn fellow creatures for belonging to the wrong "class" and to call for the liquidation of that class as a measure of human progress?

Isaac Babel's *Red Cavalry* almost does the job. It is impossible to read this compressed epic about the Polish-Russian war of 1920—the first foreign campaign of the Red Army—without feeling the spiritual charge of that moment in history. At a time when every major European writer seemed to be demonstrating the waste of war, Babel's Jewish narrator, attached as a military correspondent to General Semyon Budyonny's First Cavalry Army, makes his hard peace with the revolution that is entrenching itself on the battlefield. He sees the pillage of old religions—the Catholic churches of Poland, the dashing rites of the Cossacks, and along with the weary synagogues he remembers from his youth much of the Jewish population that attends them. Personally, he loathes killing. He will not use a gun to fight the

At His Side: The Last Years of Isaac Babel
by A.N. Pirozhkova
translated from the Russian by Anne Frydman and Robert L. Busch
(Steerforth Press, 171 pp., $22)

Jews in Russian Literature after the October Revolution: Writers and Artists between Hope and Apostasy
by Efraim Sicher
(Cambridge University Press, 280 pp., $59.99)

Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Change 1890-1990
edited by Susan Tumarkin Goodman
(Prestel-Verlag and The Jewish Museum, New York, 267 pp., $35)

Arrested Voices: Resurrecting the Disappeared Writers of the Soviet Regime
by Vitaly Shentalinsky
introduction by Robert Conquest
(The Free Press, 322 pp., $25)

The Bones of Berdichev: The Life and Fate of Vasily Grossman
by John Garrard and Carol Garrard
(The Free Press, 437 pp., $27.50)

RUTH R. WISSE is Professor of Yiddish and Comparative Literature at Harvard.

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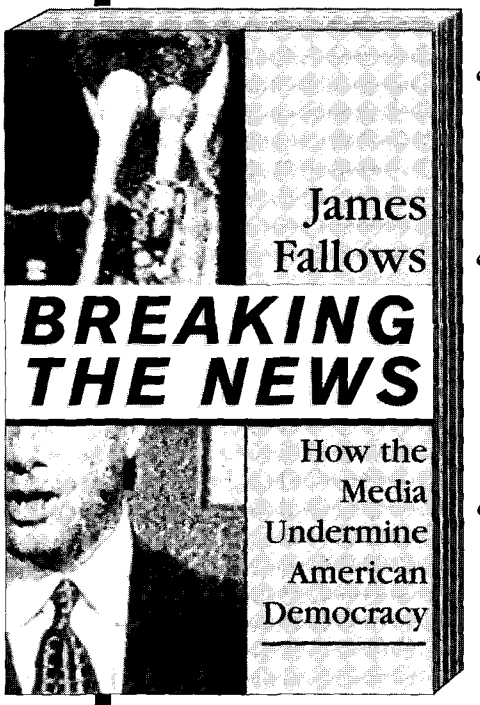
enemy or to fulfill the dying wish of a comrade, or even to save his life. But he sees in the bloodshed around him the afterbirth of a luminous possibility.

With this work, Babel, who had linked his fate to the revolution and had ridden with the Cossacks into Poland, provided the iconography of the Soviet Nativity. Some readers have found it paradoxical, ironic, incongruous, that a Jewish intellectual should have distilled the masterpiece of the Russian Revolution. Babel thought it logical. Already in 1916, when he was just publishing his first stories, he imagined himself the savior of Russian literature:

> If one thinks about it, doesn't it seem that in Russian literature so far there has been no real, joyous and vivid description of the sun? Turgenev has given us the morning dew and the still of the night. In Dostoevsky you can feel under your feet the dismal, uneven roadway as Karamazov goes to the tavern, the heavy, mysterious fog of St. Petersburg.... Do you remember the bright, fructifying sun in Gogol, a man from the Ukraine? But such passages are rare. It is "The Nose," "The Overcoat," "The Portrait," and "Notes of a Madman" that predominate.

With only half a smile, Babel predicts that the literary Messiah of this moonlit culture will come from his hometown of Odessa. His reason is that half its population is Jewish, and Jews are the touchstone of a sunny, healthful materialism. A Russian Jew like himself, bearing no moral responsibility for the Karamazovs, the Romanoffs or the Oblomovs, and freed by the consciousness of being modern from the discipline of his own religious community, could extract from each culture what he liked and no more. The overthrow of the tsar in 1917 reinforced this confidence: as once-favored targets of tsarist oppression, Jews were ideally able to prove the justice of the revolution that accepted them on equal terms. Babel had been primed in childhood by his Jewish family to "know everything" as the only way of surmounting tsarist restrictions, and he was now free under Bolshevism to put that discipline to use.

In a new study of Jews in Russian literature, Efraim Sicher shows how variously major writers reinvented themselves in the fluid aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution. He provides a learned and fresh analysis (marred by some literary jargon) of how Jewish origins were transmogrified into a new language and a new sensibility. Almost prohibited by Communism, Jewishness is beginning to enjoy among Russian scholars the critical attention that hyphenated Jewish identity has long received in Anglo-American



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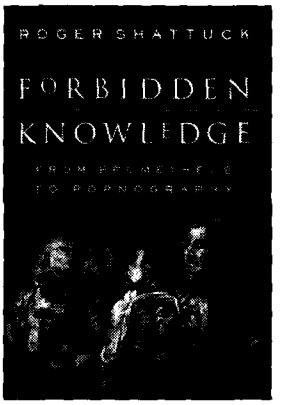

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studies. As Sicher demonstrates, Jewish images and motifs continued to figure powerfully under the coercive pressure of an ideology that inhibited Jews from exploring their Jewishness, and drove many of them to apostasy.

Of the four main writers whom Sicher treats—Isaac Babel, Osip Mandelstam, Boris Pasternak and Ilya Ehrenburg—Babel alone grew up in a practicing Jewish family. He attended a traditional Jewish cheder, and he knew Yiddish well enough to translate Sholem Aleichem. At home among the Jews, Babel was able to draw on this intimacy to produce an intricately disjunctive modernist art. Sicher is certainly right when he says that Babel's Jewishness constitutes the novelty of his contribution to Russian literature. Some of the prose is saturated with Jewish colors and smells and shapes and memory:

> In Beresteczko, the old ways had been watered down, but after three centuries, tradition's deep roots still produced offshoots in the warm and decaying Volhynian atmosphere. Here the Jews made their living by forming the link between the Russian peasant and the Polish gentleman, the Czech settler and the Lodz factory.

Though the narrator is not kindly disposed toward this Hasidic community, with its "inexpressibly gloomy" barns, its "irredeemable" stench of stale herring, and the "case histories of frontier misfortune" that constitute its population, he locates the Jews so firmly in Russia that one could hardly imagine the landscape without them. The Jewish atmosphere rules Babel's Russian prose even when his subject is Russia's plunder of the Jews.

Yet Babel's Jewishness was also new. He did not sigh over Jewish fate, or drift toward martyrological Christianity in the manner of Mandelstam and Pasternak. Instead, like his fellow Odessan Vladimir Jabotinsky, the founder of the Revisionist wing of the Zionist movement, Babel enjoyed the core of self-trust in Jewishness, its reliance on reason and its sanctification of life over death. Jabotinsky wanted Jewish energy to realize itself in reconstituted sovereignty in a national homeland. Babel brought this same muscular Jewishness as an offering to the Revolution. He believed that the Bolsheviks would transmute violence into political discipline just as he was forging horror into art, and that Russians would accept a Jew as their national story-teller the way the Cossacks in *Red Cavalry* grew accustomed to the sight of a Jew in the saddle.

Babel fully expected his artistic self-interest to serve the interests of the bold new regime. But self-interest depends on the nature of the interested self. And this is where the story of Russian Jews under Communism comes to exert such fascination: at the point where deception colludes with self-deception, and the brute state finds its willing conscripts. Owing to its theoretical internationalism, Communism offered modern Jews the unique opportunity of renouncing Judaism not through defection (conversion to another religion) or through assimilation (conversion to another nationality), but through gradual national self-transcendence. Gradual, because the Revolution could only destroy so much at once.

When the Bolsheviks seized control of Russia, Lenin, who had initially considered the Jews a "fictitious nation," was forced to treat them as a national minority at least temporarily, there being no other way of standardizing their presence among the dozens of other peoples that constituted the Soviet Union. Thus in the decade of political remission between the overthrow of the tsar and Stalin's domination of the Party, a knowledgeable Jew such as Babel could talk about everything Jewish as long as it was being left behind, which was the way Babel thought of the Jewish way of life in any case. Jewish writers and intellectuals were able to publish, to teach, to research, even to preach in Yiddish as long as they were solidifying the Communist future, not the future of the Jews.

The only Jews in peril were those who intended to maintain the Jewish way of life or to perpetuate the Jewish people, refusing the bargain of self-repudiation that was being forced on them. The fortunate few among these resisters left or were expelled from the Soviet Union. A dozen Hebrew writers, including the great poets Chaim Nahman Bialik and Saul Tchernikhovsky, won permission to leave for Palestine in 1921, an exodus that seems miraculous in retrospect. The Habimah theater troupe never returned to Russia from its American tour in 1926. But thousands of others who tried to protect their religion or their nationalism were silenced, first by political ostracism, then by internal exile and murder.

The Soviet Union in the early 1920s resembled Germany in the mid-1930s, in that individuals were required to make moral choices within a political system that was only beginning to enforce its totalitarian rule. The enthusiastic Jewish supporters of Communism may not all have set out to crush Judaism and their fellow Jews, and not all those who made their peace with Communism were enthusiastic. By 1925, Babel was already writing to his family in western Europe about the difficulties of working in the odious professional milieu of Moscow "deprived of art and of the freedom of speech," but advising them to return because one could create for oneself better "and more interesting" conditions there than anywhere else. He deliberately placed the "self-interest" of a writer in that unique time and place above the moral life of a Jew. What set Babel apart from his fellow artists and writers was that, having knowingly made his compromise with moral Judaism, he made that compromise his subject, recording with breathtaking honesty the way in which the intellectual elite was engaged in a process of destruction, with pistols or pens.

II.

This complex and disturbing story is documented—one might even say, illustrated—in *Russian Jewish Artists in a Century of Change 1890-1990*, the catalog to an interesting exhibition that was recently mounted at the Jewish Museum in New York. It begins with artists a generation older than Isaac Babel and ends with the artists of perestroika and glasnost, most of whom have emigrated to the West. In a shrewd overview, Michael Stanislawski warns us not to expect any straightforward story of victims and aggressors, of "us and them," since the process of modernization in Russia implicated the Jews in their oppression. In a boon to lovers of paradox, the multinational character of the Russian state institutionalized the distinction between Jews and other nationalities even as Marxism required that the distinction be erased. There is no parallel in modern Jewish history for quite so contradictory a social contract.

Opening the show are works of grand ambition by artists who first broke out of the Pale of Jewish Settlement into the salons of St. Petersburg. Isaak Levitan's *Study for Above Eternal Peace* (1894) foregrounds a tiny Christian cemetery on a dark green promontory overlooking an arching lake under a sky of light-bearing clouds. This picture has been called one of the world's most tragic landscapes for the way it dwarfs the human condition under the weight of nature. In Leonid Pasternak's *News from the Motherland* (1889), the sentiment is concentrated in a human group rather than in a landscape: two Russian soldiers in a cramped room studded with photographs listen thoughtfully as a third reads aloud a letter from home. Together, these well-known paintings remind us of the powerful emotional affinities that link Slavic culture and Jewish culture, perhaps best expressed in the Jewish sigh *oy gotenyu* and its heavy Russian counterpart *oy, bozhemoy*.

But there is otherwise nothing distinc-

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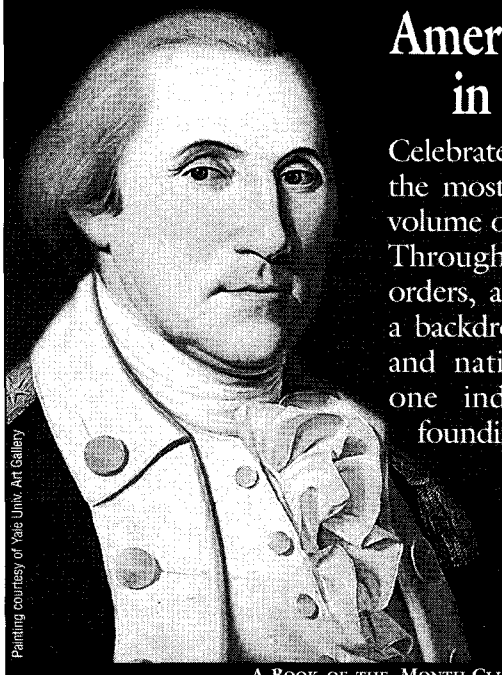
tively Jewish in these paintings. Generally, this exhibition provides no definition of a Jewish aesthetic, emphasizing at every point the creative interaction between Jewish artists and their counterparts in Russia and western Europe where many went to study or to settle. Susan Tumarkin Goodman notes that Levitan's landscapes were considered the quintessential representations of Russian nature and the Russian spirit.

With the liberalization of tsarist policy in 1905, there began a period of much freer Jewish self-expression, and it accelerated until the death of Lenin in 1924 (which was also the year of *Red Cavalry*). Greater freedom meant more obvious contradictions. Once Jews entered the universities and the revolutionary movements, the question of identity became so fluid that in several works by Sholem Aleichem, a Russian student switches identities with his Jewish classmate to test the proposition that it is "hard to be a Jew." On the other side of this prince-and-pauper exchange, Jews found their liberation from Judaism in the overthrow of the tsar. In the imagery of the Soviet Yiddish poet Perets Markish, blind Samson was turning the mill wheel "from the Nile to the Dnieper" to topple all the world in revolution. The revolution was, for Markish, the catalyst for a modern Yiddish poetry that could freely scramble and recast centuries of Jewish cultural traditions in a recomposition of self.

Progressivism invited artists to celebrate the break with tradition, while the populist strain in the revolutionary movement promoted interest in the folk, in folk culture and in folk arts. Almost a decade before the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts was founded in Jerusalem, Yehuda Pen established the first Jewish art school of the Russian empire in 1897 in Vitebsk, the city that became famous as the birthplace of Marc Chagall. About midway between Petersburg to the north and Kiev to the south, Vilna to the west and Moscow to the east, the half-Jewish city of Vitebsk stood at the cultural crossroads between the intellectualism of Lithuanian Jewry and the Byelorussian Hasidism of Habad, the forerunner of today's Lubavitch. It was thus the ideal location for a syncretistic Jewish culture.

Pen himself aspired to be a Jewish Old Master. His representational scenes and portraits are compressed visual narratives, in a naturalism bordering on the illustrational, and with overt sympathies that some viewers find sentimental. His students—Marc Chagall, El Lissitzky, Ilya Chashnik and others—became leading members of the Russian avant-garde, dis-



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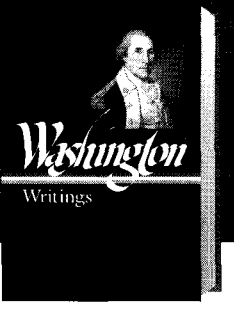

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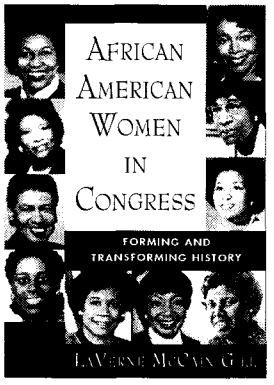

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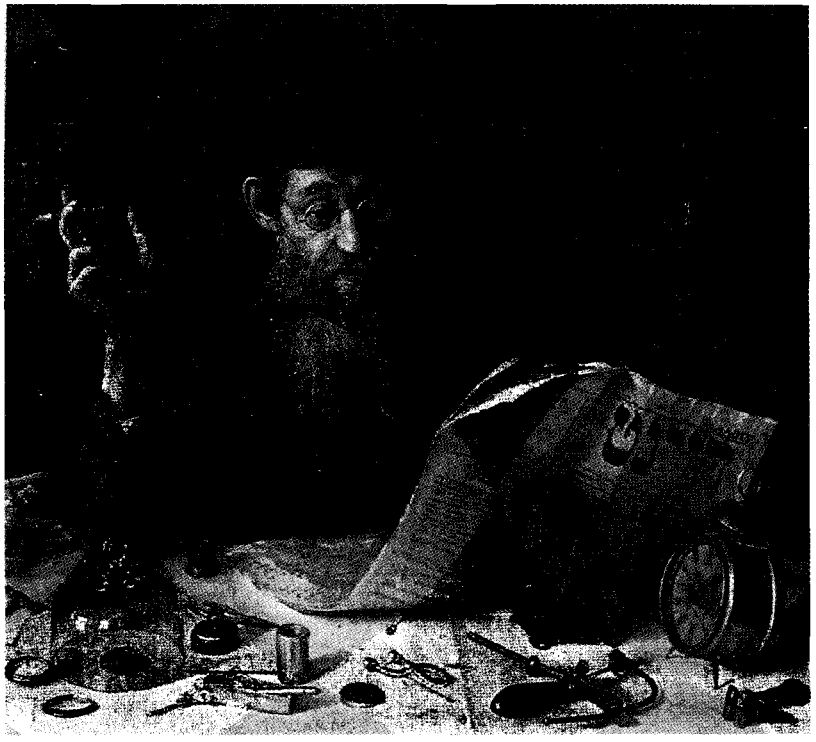
placing and abstracting familiar Jewish objects in radically new combinations. Modernism in the Russian Jewish context did not necessarily quicken deracination. Quite the opposite: revolutionary Jews were sometimes driven back on themselves in reaction to the anti-Semitism that they encountered, and in sympathetic response to the needs of the "people."

It was Chagall who was the brightest spirit of the bunch. His *The Cemetery* (1917) is a buoyant rejoinder to Levitan's *Study for Above Eternal Peace*. In place of the silent churchyard, Chagall paints a bright-hued Jewish "house of the living" (a Yiddish euphemism for a graveyard) with tombstones and cenotaphs falling merrily all over one another in the grass. Chagall's crowded Jewish cemetery resembles a busy town, the Hebrew letters on the tombstones appear to be engaging in conversation, and the earth presses up against the cubist sky, as if earth and heaven were on intimate terms. Here, as in the fiction of Babel, Jewishness is bursting with vitality and wit.

Jewish artists opposed their Jewish forefathers by making graven images, and the tsar by their delight in being Jewish. But not all Jewish writers and artists took delight in the Jewish past. As part of the same process of modernization that made them quit Jewish practice, many Jewish artists acquired the distaste for the Jews that was common to Dostoevskian Christianity and the newer Marxism. As the culture of Bolshevism took hold, the creative refiguring of the Jew often turned into self-caricature. The avant-garde Moscow Yiddish Art Theatre tended to mock what the Jews held sacred, including Jewish ceremonies and rabbinic authorities. Throughout the 1920s, the attack on Jewish culture was spearheaded by the Yevsektsia, the Jewish section of the Communist Party, whose members went much further than Stalin in their insistence on the utter extinction of Hebrew as part of the purge of Jewish religion and "reactionary" nationalism. Jewish communists invented special humiliations for their fellow Jews, like a show trial of Judaism on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, or the designation of Yom Kippur as a workday for the Ukraine.

By the time this retrospective of Russian Jewish art reaches the Stalinist phase of state control over the arts, the accusation of idolatry seems to issue directly from the works themselves. Consider *Perspective for the Palace of Soviets, Moscow*, which won Boris Iofan first prize in the architectural competition of 1933. The long bottom steps of Iofan's exercise in sacred revolutionary gigantism recall the sweeping strength of the Temple in Jerusalem; but then in sharp contrast to the flat-topped Jewish House of God this one spikes upward, higher than any cathedral, to pierce the sky with Lenin's outstretched hand. This is what happens—the rabbis would say, and they would be right—when Jews quit their religion to become the new Pharaoh's designers! Now do you grasp—they would ask, and they would be right—why the Torah subordinates aesthetics to morality and warns against idolatry as the cardinal sin?



Courtesy State Museum of Art of the Republic of Belorussia, Minsk

YEHUDA PEN, *THE WATCHMAKER*, 1914

The exhibition at the Jewish Museum demonstrated how the very advantages that Russian Jews enjoyed over the rest of the population, including their capacity for creative adaptation, could work to the detriment of their Jewishness. The portrait of Lenin by Isaak Brodsky (1937), of "Iron" Feliks Dzerzhinsky by Evgeny Katsman (1923), of Joseph Stalin by Moisei Nappelbaum (1934): these images remind us how close to the center of power the Jews of Russia were under Communism, and how much of their heritage they themselves destroyed in order to take on the values of the Revolution. When Stalin began to unleash his terror against Jewish cultural elites in 1936, and then returned to the task in 1948, Russian Jewish artists could no longer seek moral and psychological protection in a Jewishness that they themselves had enthusiastically undermined.

The Soviet Yiddish novelist David Bergelson spoke for more than himself alone when he confessed, in the wake of the Holocaust, that "I traded in my six-speared [Jewish] star for the five-speared Soviet star, and the sixth spear has pierced me through the heart." What actually killed Bergelson, along with other major Yiddish writers and artists on August 12, 1952, was an executioner's bullet that was fired on Stalin's orders, just half a year before the tyrant died. But Bergelson's conversion to Communism had been strictly voluntary. He had placed himself "In Harness," that being the name of a magazine he published abroad in 1926, and the contempt for the Jewish star to which he was alluding was quite independent of the role of defamer of the Jews that he was later persuaded to assume.

The voluntary anti-Jewishness of Jewish artists and Jewish commissars seems to have been more effective than that of other minorities against their own religious and national traditions, and the "thaw" that followed Stalin's death could not undo the devastation that Jews themselves had helped to wreak. An enormous cultural vacuum had formed where Jewish culture once flourished. The final section of the Jewish Museum's retrospective was unintentionally saddening, as nonconformist movements from the 1960s onward revealed how very little Jewish artists have left to draw upon in their search for identity.

III.

Despite Stanislawski's warning not to look for any straightforward national saga of light and darkness in the history of the Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, writers in growing numbers who are turning to this subject

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can hardly avoid moral considerations. The involvement of Jews in Communism complicates the assessment of their guilt or innocence, of their role as subjects or objects in the story. Still, questions of national right and wrong do not disappear from history just because Jews can be found among the villains as well as the victims. Formalism may have arisen in Russia as a brilliant means of establishing apolitical criteria within a system that had perverted the language of good and evil; but atheistic socialism was more than anything else a claim of moral advancement, and even writers as philosophically skeptical as Isaac Babel assumed that there was an evolutionary law at work in human affairs. That the champions of Progress were trampled to death by Progress makes it more urgent, not less urgent, that we seek a moral judgment. Anything less would trivialize the purpose of their lives and the struggle of their art. What genius will come along to do justice to the complexity of Communist injustice? And, in the meantime, how is the story being told?

John and Carol Garrard conceived the life of the Soviet Jewish writer Vasily Grossman as a new version of Holocaust narrative. Grossman provides the ideal link between Soviet terror and Nazi terror. He was the first Soviet writer to show the political parallels between Communism and Fascism, compounding the force of his accusation by placing it against the background of the Great Patriotic War that Russia was fighting against Germany. In his epic novel *Life and Fate*, Grossman's Grand Inquisitor, the Gestapo officer Liss, tortures his Soviet prisoner, the conscientious Bolshevik Mostovskoy, by inviting him to recognize that they are really brothers under the skin:

> You knew Lenin personally. He created a new type of party. He was the first to understand that only the Party and its Leader can express the spirit of the nation. He did away with the Constituent Assembly. But just as Maxwell destroyed Newton's system of mechanics while thinking he had confirmed it, so Lenin considered himself a builder of internationalism while in actual fact he was creating the great nationalism of the twentieth century ...

Mostovskoy gradually cracks under the logic of the Nazi-Soviet equation: "If I believed in God, I would think that terrible interrogator had been sent to me as a punishment for my sins." Grossman had been trained as a social realist to treat literature as a form of indoctrination, and once he realized how Bolshevism had exploited the Russian people, and how Stalin was covering up the Holocaust, he turned the same methods of fiction against the rulers of the Kremlin.

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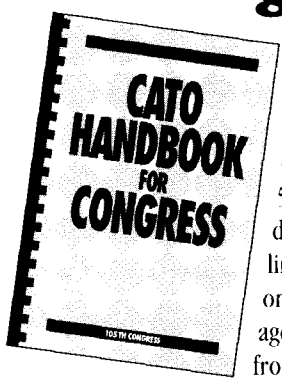

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With matching fervor, the Garrards shape the life of Grossman into a fable of cultural resistance. The German massacre of Russian Jews began in Grossman's native city Berdichev on September 15, 1941, claiming his mother among its 30,000 local victims. Grossman knew that he could have brought his mother to live with him in Moscow, had he been prepared to override the objections of his non-Jewish wife. Perhaps his guilt prompted him to behave with extraordinary physical courage under fire as a war correspondent at Stalingrad, and to manifest even deeper courage in helping to establish the circumstances of her death. While the war was still in progress, he and Ilya Ehrenburg, the Soviet Union's two most popular war correspondents, undertook to collect documentary testimony for a *Black Book* about the destruction of the Jews on Russian soil, and Grossman contributed to it a stirring essay on "The Murder of the Jews of Berdichev." The project was sponsored by the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, formed after the German invasion of Russia in 1941, when Stalin was eager to win back the international Jewish support he had forfeited two years earlier with the joint Nazi-Soviet invasion of Poland. Though Grossman knew telling the truth about the murder of the Jews would implicate Soviet citizens, he tried to serve his profession and his mother's memory without fear of political consequences.

Soviet Jewish writers experienced the war as a time of relative freedom: in defending Russia against Germany, they were able at last to speak out as Jews. By 1945, however, Stalin had no more use for his token Jews, and he axed the project of the *Black Book* as a prelude to executing members of the Committee. Ehrenburg understood that the shift in policy signaled a change in Stalin's mood, and, cutting his losses, he saw to it that a copy of the manuscript reached the West. Grossman, who was as blunt as Ehrenburg was canny, refused to adjust to the anti-Semitism that surfaced as a feature of state policy, and, among other literary crimes, he insisted on keeping the hero of his Stalingrad novel (later expanded into *Life and Fate*) a Jew. It is likely that had Stalin not died on March 5, 1953, Grossman would have been murdered in the Lubyanka Prison, sharing the fate of most other prominent Jewish artists and writers.

Instead, he became a victim of the new Party policy that tried to kill the writing while sparing the writer. In 1958 Boris Pasternak was threatened with exile if he went to Stockholm to accept his Nobel Prize for Literature, and three years later the KGB came to Grossman's apartment to seize all the manuscripts of *Life and Fate*. Grossman was told by the watchdogs of Soviet literature that his work was so dangerous to the state that it would not surface for another 250 years. Thanks to the help of admirers, and photocopying equipment provided by Andrei Sakharov, a smuggled microfilm of the epic work reached the West and was published in French translation in 1983, not quite two decades after Grossman's death.

It was Shimon Markish, son of the murdered Soviet Yiddish poet Perets Markish, who first predicted that the life of Grossman was the stuff of myth. Markish said that by heeding God's charge to Moses, "You shall not lie one to another," Grossman had become the truth-telling Russian Jewish writer in the motherland of Doublespeak. The Garrards point out that Grossman went further than his fellow dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn in exposing not only the corruption of Marxism-Leninism, but also the xenophobic "spirit of Russia" that had helped to seal the fate of its Jews. We seem to have come full cycle from Babel, who thought that the Jew could best attest to the Revolution. Perhaps it was the Jew who could best attest to its demise.

Yet in subsuming the story of a Russian Jewish novelist under Holocaust history, and making it a monument to the Jews of Berdichev (with an appended list of Berdichev Jews who were murdered by the Germans), the Garrards seem to absolve the Jews from responsibility for Communism in the same way that Solzhenitsyn protects the "Russian people" from acknowledging their responsibility for Communism. This is absurd. If "Jews" were only victims and "Christians" were only victims, then who made and sustained the Soviet regime? The Jews of Berdichev were indeed trapped between the invading Germans and the resident Ukrainians in 1941, but they had been similarly trapped between the Cossacks and Poles in 1921, and the greatest Russian Jewish writer of his day remained neutral in that slaughter because at that time the Reds, and not the Fascists, were on the march.

The history of the Jewish writer in Soviet Russia cannot truthfully be narrowed to the German front, or subsumed under the Holocaust. Both the fame that Grossman enjoyed as a war correspondent and the silencing to which he was subject tell a different story of shared power and betrayal. And this brings us, inevitably, to Ilya Ehrenburg (1891-1967), whose extraordinary life does not lend itself to any myth of heroism. (It has been skillfully told in *Tangled Loyalties*, Joshua Rubinstein's recent biography of Ehrenburg.) For about two decades, from the late 1930s to the late 1950s, he served the Soviet Union as the most effective overseas launderer of its criminal acts. Art was a sacrament for writers such as Isaac Babel and Osip Mandelstam, and for Vasily Grossman it was a force of moral persuasion. Their common idea of art as an independent standard of judgment put them on a collision course with the regime that permitted no independent standards of judgment. But Ehrenburg stayed very close to the surface of events, and his journalistic need to be at the center of the action determined his adjustment to the sources of power.

A Russian writer courting power had to adjust to the will of the Party. Ehrenburg's unique success at doing just that made him one of only two prominent Jews to survive Stalin's purges, the other being Lazar Kaganovich, Stalin's loyal associate and a member of the Politburo from 1930 to 1957. According to the persuasive evidence of Arkady Vaksberg in *Stalin Against the Jews*, these two men were spared because Stalin was always careful to mask his murderous anti-Semitism by maintaining at least a few visible Jews in positions of power. Ehrenburg attributed his survival to luck. But he may have been the one Soviet writer in whom Stalin met his match.

At almost any point in his career, Ehrenburg could have been charged with "deviations" much more serious than those that cost other writers their lives. He was only 15 years old when he joined the Bolshevik faction of the revolutionary struggle and engaged in underground activities that landed him in prison. Facing a long sentence for anti-tsarist sedition, he was helped by his father to leave for Paris, and there he rebelled again, this time against the constraints of the Party, by publishing lampoons of Lenin. He became an ex-Bolshevik before the Bolshevik Revolution. The city of Paris took literature and art more seriously than politics, and Ehrenburg, enjoying its freedoms, took on its bohemian coloration, befriending the greatest writers and artists of his day and trying to become one of them himself. In those years, he was the quintessential cosmopolitan internationalist. "Everyone knows," he said, "that nationalists of various countries are similar to each other, like twins." The need to surmount his origins by denying the importance of origins—he shared this need with so many other European Jews—helped to make him an ideal cultural

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arbiter for the European continent.

Yet Russian was his language and he was tied to its readers, and so Ehrenburg could not hope to remain at the center of action without rejoining the victorious Bolsheviks. He went back to Russia during the critical year 1917, and by the time he returned to Paris in 1921—he and his new wife being possibly the first citizens to leave the country legally, with Soviet passports—he had begun to fashion for himself the Janus role that he would play during the next fifty years, as Europe's voice in the Soviet Union and Russia's voice in Europe. For Efraim Sicher, Ehrenburg was the "eternal chameleon."

I am influenced in my own thinking about Ehrenburg by the Yiddish poet Abraham Sutzkever (quoted in Rubinstein's book), who, between 1944 and 1946, saw firsthand how Ehrenburg inspired the Jewish partisans, extending help to the refugees who flocked to him as to their savior, and how he tried to oppose the Russian anti-Semitism that surfaced and became officially sanctioned in the very midst of the war against the Nazis. Ehrenburg often toadied to Stalin, but in 1953 he alone opposed outright the dictator's last murderous plan to "protect the Jews from the wrath of their countrymen" by shipping them off to Siberia and Birobidjan. Even Vasily Grossman, in obvious distress, signed Stalin's dictated proposal for this project, but Ehrenburg, refusing to sign, sent off a letter to Stalin and warned that such a project would provide anti-Soviet ammunition to "Zionists, Bundists, and other enemies of our Motherland." He argued against sending the Jews to their death because this would prevent their kindlier disappearance into the socialist international, a solution dear to the hearts of "progressive forces" the world over. That Ehrenburg demonstrated obvious courage in writing this letter and that these tortured arguments were the only ones that could have appealed to Stalin do not alter the fact that he had dedicated his life to these same ideas. Stalin died, mercifully, before he managed to send the Jews off to their death in faraway places.

In the final analysis, though, the pluck that Ehrenburg showed within the Soviet system cannot entirely vitiate his sponsorship of that system, first in his youth when he became a Bolshevik, again in his 20s when he returned to Russia, and thereafter as the leading intellectual Soviet ambassador-at-large. One cannot speak of Ehrenburg as a Jew in any meaningful way without recalling the moral imperatives that he chose to transgress. Contrary to his claim, nationalisms are not at all alike in either their teachings or their practice; his calumny obscures the Jewish idea of moral election and the history of those who uphold it.

IV.

Until not very long ago, Soviet radicalism enjoyed great prestige among the left in the West. Imposed egalitarianism was deemed more honest than the "hypocritical" and "bourgeois" democratic process; its cruelty was justified on the grounds of political expediency; and demands for a moral reckoning from the supporters of Communism were called a McCarthyist plot. The opening of the archives, like the opening of the concentration camps, obviates the excuse of ignorance. The evidence has been there all along, of course, for those who sought it or were prepared to admit it, as they read works such as Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* or Gustav Herling's (thankfully reprinted) *A World Apart*; but it is now confirmed in such detail that those who still cling to the myths of misplaced idealism lack even a shred of credibility. John Reed comes to look like Clyde Barrow, when you know how much he was paid for his Soviet propaganda. One can hardly overestimate, therefore, the importance of a book such as Vitaly Shentalinsky's *Arrested Voices*, for the reason that he gives in his preface: "The Communist ideology was not something external, and imposed by force, but lodged itself deep in our minds and thoughts."

Communism was a vendetta of intellectuals who seized control of a state in the name of ideas and used ideas to maintain their control over it. Since Communism was based on a theoretical misdiagnosis of the human condition, it needed writers to keep up the fiction of its progress. Where mendacity maintains the state, truth is treason, and truth withheld, sedition. Shentalinsky brings to light the files of writers who were killed for these crimes. As soon as perestroika offered greater freedom of inquiry, Shentalinsky, who was an "ordinary member" of the Writers' Union, pressed for access to the records of the Committee for State Security to discover the fate of approximately 1,500 liquidated writers. Along with the confiscated papers of some of these victims, he discovered what is perhaps the most macabre literature Russia ever produced: the "confessions" that were extracted under torture. The executioners, needing retroactive legitimacy for their accusations, demanded that their victims invent the crimes that would justify the sentence that was imposed on them. It is terrifying to know that beyond the depo-

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sitions that Shentalinsky describes—the depositions of such as Isaac Babel, Osip Mandelstam, Boris Pilnyak, Mikhail Bulgakov, Nina Hagen-Torn and the Orthodox professor-priest Pavel Florensky—lies a vast archive of similar testimonies.

Shentalinsky says that it is hard to imagine the "torments of creativity" that Isaac Babel endured in the NKVD investigator's office. In order to acknowledge the charge that he was a spy for Trotsky, Babel had not only to admit to conspiracy and to describe his co-conspirators, he had also to satisfy his torturers' idea of an honest confession. The man who had invented an alter-self in so many of his stories had now to implicate himself through the same techniques of narration that he had perfected in his fiction.

Is it only ironic that the factual information embedded in this confession helps to clear up the most disturbing questions in Babel's biography, the troubling questions regarding his relations with Yezhov, the man who directed the Great Purges in the 1930s? (It turns out that Babel had been the lover of Yezhov's wife, and had only formal contacts with her husband as a visitor to their house; he was not attracted to danger, as some of his interpreters have suggested, but was introduced by a trusted old friend into a dangerous milieu.) Babel was obliged to implicate his work as well as himself in the charges of treason. When the interrogators demanded specific examples of how Trotsky had undermined his trust in the Soviet state, Babel offered this proof:

> *Red Cavalry* was only an excuse for me to express my appalling mood and had nothing to do with what was happening in the Soviet Union. Hence the emphasis on all the cruelty and absurdities of the Civil War, the artificial introduction of an erotic element and the depiction of only the most outrageous and sensational episodes. Hence the complete failure to describe the role of the party in pulling together the then still insufficiently proletarian-minded Cossacks to form regular forces and constitute the impressive unit of the Red Army that the First Cavalry army became.

One can only pray that Babel, when he declared that his work was unworthy of the Revolution, knew in some untortured recess of his being that the Revolution had been unworthy of his work.

Fortunately, for history and the many admirers of Isaac Babel, the memoir by A. N. Pirozhkova, his second wife, has now been translated into English, and it helps considerably to fill in the period in the writer's life hitherto shrouded in greatest mystery, the 1930s, and to restore the image of the robust artist before he was targeted for execution. Babel was fortunate (or supremely wise) in his choice of companion during what proved to be his last years. We know this not only from what Pirozhkova says about herself, but also from the dignified silence that she maintains about aspects of her life that have nothing to do with Babel, and from the generous good sense of her reportage.

Pirozhkova was a graduate of the Siberian Institute for Transport Engineers who worked, during some of the time she lived with Babel, on the Moscow subway, one of the most touted achievements of the Soviet state. They met in 1932, two members of the Soviet elite, and they enjoyed the relative luxuries of that position until they began to feel its corresponding threat. In addition to sharing Babel's sensual delight and his love of new experience, Pirozhkova was wholly outside the literary scene, as Babel always tried to be when he wasn't writing himself. As the 1930s wore on, Babel, who knew so much more than she did about the workings of the Soviet regime, tried to spare her his worst suspicions, but it seems clear that in joining his life to this energetic woman fifteen years his junior he was also trying to find distraction from his bitter knowledge and respite from his Jewish grief.

Babel had to know everything at all costs. (Gorky once said to him, "You are a born intelligence man. It's terrifying to let you in the door.") Yet there is some of Babel's own combination of candor and reserve in the information that Pirozhkova provides about his three children with three different women, about his relations with members of his family and some of his closest friends, about the trap that was carefully set for him, then finally sprung. For a year or so, a certain Y. E. Elsberg made himself indispensable to Babel in everything from repairing an electrical plug to arranging an evening at the theater; this was part of the "escort service" that the state provided for the writers whom it was stalking, so as to ensure the smoothness of their eventual arrest. The quotation marks that Pirozhkova puts around Babel's "very good friend" Lev Romanovich Sheinin tell the reader how this family intimate repaid their hospitality by receiving Babel in the Prosecutor's office of the Lubyanka Prison. She describes her long, vain struggle to learn what had happened to her husband and his confiscated work, and she concludes: "I can no longer hold out any hope that Babel's manuscripts have survived." It is probably a good thing that most of this memoir was written before the Soviet archives gave up their secrets about Babel's torture; the pages that she added to the memoir after learning how Babel was killed suggest that Pirozhkova might not have been able to evoke so much of the happiness of their life together had she written under the horrifying weight of its final chapter.

Pirozhkova's Babel is not the master of the genre of silence, Babel's famous self-image of the 1930s. She presents instead a writer still dedicated to his masterworks-in-progress, among them the novella "Kolya Topuz" about a former Odessa gangster like Benia Krik who tries to adapt to collectivization. We are told that Babel spent a great deal of time writing, and that many of his finished works were seized by the NKVD at the time of his arrest, never to be seen again. The Babel of Pirozhkova's description is creative and industrious, good-natured even about the screenplays and the propaganda books that he had to take on to earn a living. He declares himself the merriest member of the artistic trades, and this insistence on merriment, "as much merriment as possible, for there is nothing on earth more important," is almost a direct quotation from Sholem Aleichem, whose works he had volunteered to translate anew because they "fed his soul."

But Babel did not perpetuate Sholem Aleichem's humor of accommodation, the humor of a people that accepts the imperfection of the human condition as the basis of its contract with the One and Only God, and eschews idolatry, or the worship of man-made phenomena. Babel wanted to be a pagan writer, a writer of the sun, fearless before man and God. For this reason, he was never an equivocal revolutionary, but the boldest of Soviet writers, willing in uncompromising art to see through the experiment that others were waging in society. Grace Paley strikes a false note in her foreword to Pirozhkova's book when she tries to drown in undefined "sorrow" and "sadness" the life of a writer who tried to find the exact words for things, however rotten they were. Babel said that he "prowled like a wolf" to get the meat of his story. Let us hope that his biographer will do no less for him, when the time comes.

V.

All these books confirm just how prominently Jews figured in Russian art and politics of this century. But missing from the entire panorama—missing almost to the point of a Soviet-style silence—is any mention of the alternative experiment that Russian Jews forged for themselves during the very same years that Communism was consolidating its power. For there was anoth-

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er great Jewish experiment, and it was called Zionism. The competition between Zionism and Socialism for the allegiance of Russian Jews began in the late nineteenth century, with writers and artists contending prominently on either side. We are not speaking here of the majority of Russians, Jew or Gentile, who, simply wanting freedom, emigrated to America, to look there for the improvement of their lives. The competition to which I refer was not for relief, it was for redemption.

Some Jews were convinced that they must seek redemption as Jews always did, through their own self-perfection, which would constitute the first step toward an improved humankind. Other Jews thought to find it through the transcendence of Judaism, through the universal medium of "The People," "The International," "The Proletariat." And no social or ideological contest has ever been resolved more clearly. The Jewish internationalists charged the Jewish nationalists with a reactionary tribalism, but the Jewish nationalists proceeded to build a fresh and open society. (It is one of the recent accomplishments of that Jewish society to have served as a refuge for over half a million Jews fleeing the ruins of the Soviet experiment.) Meanwhile, indifferent to the fate of their people, the Jewish internationalists built their own house of execution.

All the remarkably nuanced and brilliant work of Russian Jewish writers and artists stands against such a stark historical verdict. But this verdict, that Zionism succeeded where Communism failed, is not really a controversial verdict: the historical record is plain, for all with eyes to see. And it is not even a verdict retroactively imposed. In 1924, having left his native Russia as part of the exodus of Hebrew writers, the poet Chaim Nahman Bialik vented his bitterness against those Russian Jewish geniuses who had ignored the fate of their brethren in pursuit of personal fame. Bialik could not understand how such brilliant people could shirk their responsibilities to others. The Jews of Russia had been quarantined behind walls like a tribe of lepers, barred from all sources of income, deprived of air and light and human dignity; and instead of coming to the assistance of these unfortunates, the Russian Jewish geniuses had spent their entire lives like "bridegrooms on their wedding night," that is to say, freed from their otherwise binding responsibilities to their fellow Jews. According to Jewish law, the bridegroom is temporarily relieved of all his other obligations, so that he may delight his bride and enjoy the life-giving pleasures of his union. But what bridegroom, Bialik wondered, would shirk his duty through a lifetime?

Writing in 1924 in welcome of Leonid Pasternak, who was visiting Palestine for the first time (his son Boris stayed behind when the parents left Russia in 1921), Bialik said that what he hoped for was the belated return of Jewish geniuses to their nation, not by thematic "contributions," books and paintings on Jewish themes, but by their actual physical engagement in the building of a Jewish homeland, in body as well as soul. He was gratified that the great Russian painter had come to Palestine to paint the Holy Land, but he wanted Jews who were more than visitors.

The relative achievements of Zionism over Communism proved commensurate with the moral advantage of Judaism over Marxism. The story of the Jews under (and in the thick of) Communism is more tragic than the story of their fellow Russians. This is not because they were subject to greater punishment under Stalin. The reason for the Jewish tragedy in Russia is more crushing. Having shaped the noblest moral alternative to Communism in this century, they alone among all the other nationalities of the Soviet Union must recognize that they enjoyed some freedom of choice, that many, many more of them could have known better, could have forged a better fate. The harsh reality of totalitarianism notwithstanding, the Jewish writers and artists of Russia were freely exercising their own will in their adaptation to Communism and in their abandonment of their own civilization. And our will, too, is free, when we choose to ignore or to learn from their fateful mistakes. •

Stages on Art's Way

BY ROGER SHATTUCK

Manet's Modernism: or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s by Michael Fried

(University of Chicago Press, 647 pp., $50)

Édouard Manet: Rebel in a Frock Coat by Beth Archer Brombert

(Little, Brown, 505 pp., $29.95)

We know that art changed profoundly in the last two centuries or so, but we are still arguing about how and when. We seek a precise moment of transition from traditional academic painting to the modern revolution, almost as we seek the missing link in human evolution. The logic of traditional art history—and the pedagogical needs of art historians—clamor for the identification of a school or a painter to represent the end of the old and the beginning of the new.

History, of course, never happens so neatly, and many contenders have presented themselves. Goya and Turner and Courbet produced works that gained official recognition and also broke the mold of traditional practice. A little later, unleashed by the Salon des Refusés in 1863 and by their own first exhibition in 1874, the painters who became known as Impressionists revised the motifs and the techniques of easel painting to produce a plein-air style whose popularity has grown steadily for more than a century. Our identification of the missing link for modern painting may never become so uncontroversial as, say, our identification of Giotto as the master of the transition to Renaissance painting. But gradually we seem to be settling on one figure, and he is Édouard Manet.

It is hard to say whether Manet's contradictions make him our hero, or the supreme misfit of nineteenth-century art. He devoted so much effort to acknowledging his predecessors that historians such as Julius Meier-Graefe considered him a museum painter. And yet, at the time of the Centennial Orangerie Show in 1932, Paul Colin wrote that "he painted the way a child plays. Nothing premeditated. Nothing willed." So was he academic or avant-garde? His reliance throughout his career on studio models during long sittings as well as his

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omnipresent sketch books qualified him as a scrupulous realist. Yet his friend Zola contended that Manet's was a pure artistic temperament driven "to achieve beautiful patches, beautiful contrasts."

For some, Manet was a delightful boulevardier with little depth of mind; for others, his intelligence out-classed that of most artists of his day and was equal to Baudelaire's. Manet was chosen as spokesman for the disgruntled painters who agitated for the Salon des Refusés, and he later served as a model of integrity and modernity for the Impressionists. But he never exhibited a single work at the Impressionist shows and continued to submit his work to the official Salon, with mixed results. He lived and painted with the ironic detachment of a dandy, but many would claim that his great unironic passions about life and art show themselves to anyone who can meet the gaze of his paintings.

Such contradictions are not superficial. By producing enigmatic figure paintings that refuse to tell a story or to surrender to their surfaces, Manet provoked in his day something of the puzzlement that we glimpse today in the work of Magritte, an artist of much lesser stature. We welcome Magritte's anomalies with indulgent laughter, but Manet is harder, and he suffered sustained and withering mockery. It is as if Manet, reversing Magritte's famous "This is not a pipe," set out before his contemporaries a succession of works bearing the defiant message, "This is a painting." Manet's paintings embody a challenge that goes far beyond the production of an ocular image.

Manet poses genuine difficulties for the museumgoer hoping to discern the origins of modern art. His subjects vary widely, from figures of Jesus to dark Spanish portraits to brightly colored café scenes. His works do not seem to form a coherent *oeuvre*. Moreover, many of his paintings display an aspect widely noticed by critics during his lifetime, but so difficult to discuss today that it is often dismissed as a false lead: this thoroughly schooled master of his craft produced paintings that frequently looked unfinished. Women's complexions appeared pasty. The perspective did not hold up. He did not hide the fact that his subjects were models in costume posing in the studio. And often there is a figure in the painting who is staring back at the viewer, knowingly or laughingly or connivingly or absently, thus breaking the theatrical illusion of the fourth wall. Painting within a tradition of illusionism, Manet refused to complete the illusion or to observe all its conventions. He reduced half-tone to a tentative buffer of shade separating starkly contrasting fields of light and dark. In *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881-82), the optical displacements in the mirror behind the barmaid risk transforming the composition into a formal enigma and overshadowing the subtle ironies in its depiction of contemporary life.

Beth Archer Brombert's biography, deeply sympathetic to Manet's character and accomplishments, uncovers a set of personal and professional dissimulations in his life, and the effect that these elaborate dissimulations had on his works. The lack of finish in Manet's art, she believes, corresponds to partially hidden anxieties in his life. Michael Fried, by contrast, pays little attention to biography and examines instead Manet's painterly ambition, specifically his divided ambition to ground painting in its past and to overcome that past by painting something new. For Fried, the unfinishedness in Manet's work has much to do with his ambivalent contribution to the adversarial stance of art represented by the Salon des Refusés and the Impressionist shows; there was nothing hypocritical or inconsistent about the fact that the greatest professional satisfaction of this modernist came from his induction into the Legion of Honor. In their very different ways, both of these books have the merit of recognizing that a part of Manet's importance lies in the fact that he does not fit.

Manet was born in 1832. The son of a wealthy Parisian magistrate and an artistically inclined mother, he overcame his father's objections and trained to be a painter in Thomas Couture's studio. Couture was the great academic painter of the day, and his monumentally academic *Romans of the Decadence* (1847) barely veiled its republican condemnation of the July Monarchy's vices, soon to be overthrown by the Revolution of 1848. Manet learned from Couture's traditionalism and reacted against it. Unlike Cézanne, who became a mulish bohemian out of similar bourgeois circumstances, Manet remained close to his family and became a dandified figure during his apprenticeship and his travels. His untraditional technique and subject-matter won him more opprobrium in the press than success in the Salon. After Courbet's defiant declaration of "realism," Manet appeared to seek official recognition by inappropriate means. A close friend of Baudelaire, who was ten years his senior and published bold theories on art and the heroism of modern life, Manet became the leader of a loose circle of younger painters. They met in Right Bank cafés, denounced the Salon and soon launched "the New Painting" or Impressionism. Manet went his own way, arranged his own shows with irregular success, weathered the assaults on his widely publicized works, and counted Mallarmé and Monet among his friends. He died at 51 from complications caused by the amputation of a leg.

Brombert declares her intentions from the start. "You can be sure that a painter

About the Dead Man Outside

They came to the door because he was small or went to some church or other
or was seen in the company of girls or boys.
Well, he was small and went to synagogue and didn't know what to make of it.
They said he was from some tribe, but he didn't understand it.
They acted as if they knew what they were doing.
They were the executioners of brown eyes and brown hair, and he happened
to have both.
Well, he said, and they went away before he awoke.
They were a dream he was having before he became the dead man.
Today the dead man lives where others died.
He passes the crematoriums without breathing.
He enters the pit graves and emerges ashen or lime-laced.
He shreds the beautiful tapestries of history and hangs in their place the rough
shirts and dank pants forsaken at the showers, and the tiny work caps.
He mounts the hewn chips of shoe soles, the twisted spectacles, the tortured
belts and suspenders, the stained handkerchiefs.
Here, he says, is history, maternity, inheritance.

MARVIN BELL

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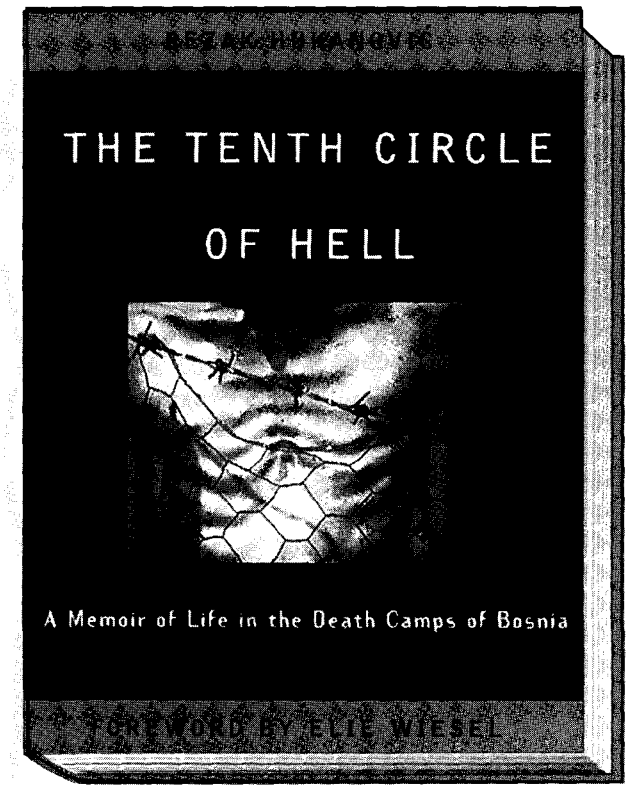
Whatever Happened to "*Never Again*"?

In the early part of this decade, as the Bosnian civil war shattered the Balkans, the evening news carried reports of savage brutality being carried out against civilians, euphemistically described as "ethnic cleansing." Now Rezak Hukanović, a Bosnian Muslim, bears witness to these atrocities in the first autobiographical account of life in the Bosnian death camps. Captured when the Serbs occupied his town, Hukanović describes the horrifying torture, rape, and grisly murder that was routinely carried out with sadistic glee by his former friends and neighbors. His powerful testimony reminds us of a lesson we should have learned fifty years ago—that "never again" means "never again."



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reveals himself in his work as much as and more than a writer does in his." This epigraph, from Diderot's *Salons*, leads directly into her argument. Brombert sets out the vivid relation between Manet's life and his art, not with a vengeance but with respect and affection for her subject. Brombert implies that Manet led a three-cornered life. He worked and saw his friends in his studio. After some irregular youthful years, he lived in a household presided over by his mother, along with his apparently childless wife and a much younger brother-in-law. And he lived also in still another realm—a realm of secrecy, tensions and rewards difficult to locate in his biography and revealed in great part by his paintings.

In recounting Manet's life at the center of Parisian artistic turmoil, Brombert supplies the social and cultural background in appropriate detail. Her biography draws on vast resources to bring Manet to life against the backdrop of his era and in relation to his unconventional accomplishments as a painter. She provides a generally reliable introduction to Manet, and through him to the remarkable dynamism of nineteenth-century French painting. Brombert alternates chronological and thematic arrangement of her materials to good effect, and only occasionally falls back on psychoanalytic clichés to provide explanations. She gives a full version of Manet's voyage to Rio de Janeiro at 19 as a naval cadet, during which his vocation as an artist became even stronger. I find reasonable her conjecture, also made by the French biographer Eric Darragon, that Ernest Renan's widely read *Life of Jesus* (1863) directly influenced Manet's two early paintings of Christ from 1864 and 1865. But I find Brombert too uncritically reliant on the reminiscences of Antonin Proust, Manet's lifetime friend and chronicler. And sometimes Brombert just recycles stereotypes of the bourgeoisie: "the simpering virgins displayed by their mothers on the marriage market," or "the puritanical philistinism of the nineteenth-century middle class."

The principal (and unvindictive) purpose of Brombert's book is to demonstrate that Manet had some significant skeletons in his closet, and that those skeletons had an impact on his painting. At 19, Manet became the lover of Suzanne Leenhoff, his music teacher, and she gave birth to a son just as Manet turned 20. From then on, Manet had to hide the fact that he had a mistress (until he married her after his father's death a decade later) and a son. Brombert accepts Adolphe Tabarant's conclusion that these machinations "pained and poisoned [Manet's] life."

And there was another secret, another shame. Manet's father, and Manet himself, died painfully of tertiary syphilis, an illness that stayed unnamed in public or private. Brombert insists that this poison spread far. The son's discovery of his father's transgressions, "along with his knowledge of his own, would serve him in his future portrayals of unspoken secrets, non-communication even between intimates, unfulfilled and unavowable longings, the inability to reach across silence, and the pretense of bourgeois propriety." And then there is the matter of Manet and other women. Almost all descriptions of the blond, witty, handsome and soon notorious painter portray him as "seductive." Three times Brombert tells us that Manet "knew how to talk to women." Yet we remain in ignorance of his love life—with his models, with his close friend Berthe Morisot, with others. Brombert writes as a discerning woman, not as a tendentious feminist. She does not state or imply that Manet was a rake and a seducer. She observes also that in his paintings "Manet's women have a life of their own ... not defined by their husbands or their children." About his relations with women, Manet remained as discreet and elusive as about his marriage and his disease.

Brombert believes that Manet, "unfulfilled in his life and his profession," revealed himself in the symbolism of his works. Many of them are allegories of his personal life. Brombert plausibly points out a personal dimension, having to do with his uneasiness about his family and his artistic situation, in *La Pêche* (1860), *The Luncheon* (1868, with his son Leon dominating the composition), *Berthe Morisot with a Black Hat and Violets* (1872) and *In the Conservatory* (1879). In the latter picture, for example, Manet painted an elegant married couple, she seated on a bench and he leaning on its back, the husband looking uncannily like Manet; and so it appears that Manet is depicting himself in a composition that emphasizes the fact that, though placed at close quarters, the husband's and wife's hands and eyes do not meet. It is a portrait not of intimacy, but of isolation. I am not convinced, though, by the personal allegories that Brombert proposes for *The Old Musician* (1862) and *Jesus Mocked* (1865). Discussing *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (1881-82), Brombert detects an antiheroic strain, and sees the bemused barmaid as "a modern divinity, not of love, but of its illusion." Perhaps.

Michael Fried restricts his book to Manet's paintings of the 1860s, which were a turning point, he believes, in Manet's development as a painter and also in the development of modernism in painting. But Fried's purpose is far from restricted. This is the third and presumably the final volume in an overarching project dealing with depictions of "theatricality" and "antitheatricality" in painting. He launched his project in 1967, in an article in *Artforum* called "Art and Objecthood." Discussing contemporary minimalist works that rely on the presence of the beholder to rescue them from literal thingness or objecthood, Fried led up to a declaration of "theater's profound hostility to the arts" and of the need "to defeat theater." I found his pages abstruse; but they caused a stir, as did the appearance two years later of the bulk of his dissertation on Manet's sources in a special number of *Artforum*.

At that point Fried decided to *reculer pour mieux sauter*, to establish the grounds of his interpretation by moving backward in the history of his subject. *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* appeared in 1980, and it circles around Diderot's preference for paintings that show figures totally absorbed in unheroic activity and unaware of any beholder. A decade later *Courbet's Realism* examined, among other themes, how Courbet overcame this tradition of absorption in his figure paintings and often seemed to enter the painted scene himself as painter-beholder.

Fried's new book carries his categories of theatricality and absorption into promising terrain. *Manet's Modernism* reprints and then reaffirms (with minor reservations) his dissertation, and adds two powerful chapters on Manet's unique and guiding role in his own generation of 1863. (There is another addition that is not so welcome, a chapter written for a conference on Derrida's recent work, and it is less pertinent and more clotted in style than the other four.) The book accommodates a number of loosely interwoven topics—a lengthy commentary on nineteenth-century critics, careful and loving readings of individual paintings, a concern with redefining modernism, and more. Fried acknowledges "a certain absence of unity" and glancingly justifies it as appropriate to his subject matter. (It is inexcusable, in a book about theatricality, which is so considerably determined by size and scale, that Fried does not give the dimensions of the many paintings reproduced.)

This is a book composed at a very high level of intellectual communication. Its learning and its argument overflow into 170 pages of endnotes as well as into substantial footnotes, as if Fried's scholarly barque needs double outrig-

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gers. He sometimes overloads his sentences with the language of higher incoherence, which may impress some readers. At heart, however, Fried is not a mystifier. He wants to convince us with evidence and sound reason. Serious readers will take note of his running exchange with certain scholars and critics. Fried acknowledges three with graciousness. Nils Gösta Sandblad's *Manet: Three Studies in Artistic Conception* concentrates on the same decade of the 1860s. (It is, to my mind, the most satisfying single study of Manet.) Fried quotes at some length from his early mentor Clement Greenberg, whose influential essay "Modernist Painting" (1960) argues that painting since Manet has tended toward purity by paying attention to the nature of its own medium, particularly to its flatness. And T. J. Clark, whose studies of Courbet and Manet give primary place to a Marxian social-historical approach to painting, plays the role of Fried's hovering interlocutor and occasional adversary.

In the "Coda" of his book, his greater summation, Fried describes Manet's response to the crisis of antitheatricality, his shattering of the illusion of theatricality among the self-absorbed figures in a painting. Manet "courted unintelligibility" and employed "a kind of strikingness" and a "facingness" that reaffirm the presence of the beholder. The following paragraph, which nicely epitomizes his argument and his style, reaches all the way back to the first volume of the trilogy, and to Fried's earlier preoccupation with minimalist art.

> All this [antitheatricality and unintelligibility] may be understood, as I say in *Courbet's Realism*, as an embrace of theatricality in the presentational rather than "actional" meaning of the term; Manet's involvement with Watteau, whose art Diderot had criticized as mannered, is altogether to the point. At the same time, I suggest there that the very extremity of the measures by which Manet's paintings acknowledge beholding as inescapably the fate of painting can have the effect of making the actual beholder feel excluded or supererogatory, and that it may be *that* experience that Manet's viewers have found more disorienting than any other. (I also describe Manet's intentions as at once theatrical and antitheatrical, hence as neither one nor the other in the sense I had been giving the terms until that moment.) In any case, Manet's modernism, with respect to the issue of beholding, consists precisely in the doubleness of its relation to the Diderotian tradition: on the one hand, marking the close of that tradition by insisting as never before on the "truth" about painting that the tradition had come about to deny or forestall; on the other hand, demonstrating by example that there could be no mere laying bare

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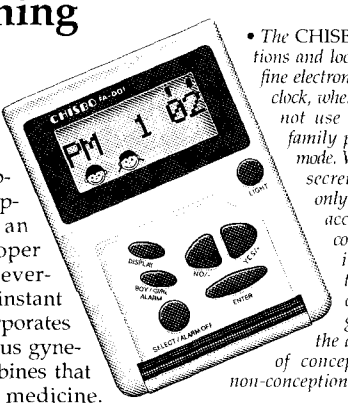

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of that "truth" and therefore no entire extinguishing of that tradition, which is to say that "presentationality" in Manet's art is itself not simply presented (what could that have meant?) but rather is *represented* (not that the opposition "present/represent" is other than unstable, but precisely that constitutive instability is my point). For all its radicalization of theatricality, in other words, something in Manet's art was in the profoundest tension with the latter (cf. my discussion of his courting of unintelligibility, subversion of potentially absorptive motifs, denial of individual psychology, refusal of closure on the plane of technique; all such operations imply the "presence" of the suppressed term, as does Bataille's insistence that Manet's art "effaces" traditional subject matter). Painting after Manet would be severed from the Diderotian tradition that had made it possible (it would no longer be a requirement of ambitious painting that it defeat theatricality, though antagonism to the latter would remain a live option). But painting after Manet would not be liberated from the concerns of that tradition (it would not thereafter be indifferent to problems of beholding), least of all when a final step in a formalist-modernist evolution would purport to go beyond painting into Minimalist objecthood.

This is, obviously, pretty rough going. After weeks of reading Fried and tracking his arguments, I still cannot follow the fourth sentence that begins "In any case...." The structure (or structurelessness) of the sentence, the rhetorical question in parentheses, and the catch-up lunge toward meaning in the final parenthetical clause suggest that Fried is aware of his own distress. Using "precisely" twice does not help him.

Fried can write comprehensibly. When he reaches for powerful conclusions, he tends to produce convolution rather than clarity. Still, its style notwithstanding, the passage that I have just quoted, and Fried's argument generally, strains toward significant distinctions. The problem, I fear, is that "theatricality," the pivotal term in Fried's enterprise, has buckled under the weight that he places on it.

The condition of theatricality arises out of what Fried calls in *Courbet's Realism* (and reaffirms on the previous page in *Manet's Modernism*) "the primordial convention that paintings are made to be beheld." The convention can be served in two ways: actionally (or absorptively), by depicting human figures entirely wrapped up in what they are doing and therefore unaware of the beholder, like actors behind a transparent fourth wall; and presentationally, by depicting figures who look out at the beholder or at least face him in acknowledgment of his presence. According to Fried, Manet developed a presentational theatricality in opposition to the absorptive theatricality admired by Diderot in the paintings of Greuze.

Manet's "doubleness," I think, resides less in his paintings being "at once theatrical and antitheatrical" than in their successive alternation between facingness and absorption. Moreover, Fried's two forms of theatricality fail to clarify our relation to painting unless one adds a prior category not adduced by Fried, what I would call histrionic theatricality. Many academic painters of historical and mythological scenes showed figures absorbed in their heroic actions yet performing them in so dramatic and expansive a way as to acknowledge and even play to the beholder. Consider Manet's largest painting, *The Execution of Maximilian* (Mannheim version, 1868-69). Its censored political subject, its immense size (three meters wide) and its dramatic composition constitute the elements of a histrionic painting, not a presentational one. But comparison with related works by David and Goya reveals how carefully Manet eliminated emotional gestures and other forms of staginess. Without the contrasting category of histrionic theatricality, it is difficult for Fried to locate the muffled quality, the antitheatricality, of Manet's largest work.

Fried's grand comparison of painting and theater, in terms of their respective relations to the spectator, raises interesting questions about maintaining and breaking theatrical illusion in figure paintings by means of the glance, pose, costume, compositional anomalies, and the like. But the comparison is a little obvious. It is also somewhat misleading: it can lead to false philosophical quandaries about whether Niagara Falls makes a noise if no one is there to hear it. Finally Fried does not convince me that "theatricality" should become the Open Sesame of art history and criticism. I am persuaded only that the notion has genuine if limited revelations to make about eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French painting, and about Manet in particular.

Fried's argument plants itself in a set of abstractions that have not been brought adequately into focus. Elsewhere he states that he is guided by ontological and epistemological preoccupations. An insistent part of his mind wants to do philosophy rather than look at paintings. The above passage, please note, refers to no works. He does not remain faithful to "the folds of flesh at the back of Victorine's neck" to which he paid fleeting homage a few pages earlier. Fried prefers to move toward the refuge, or the higher ground, that is found in much contemporary writing: doubleness, paradox, ambiguity, undecidability. He often leaves paintings behind for the Valhalla of big ideas and theories.

These two books, in markedly different ways, treat many aspects of nineteenth-century French art, including the rivalry between color and line, the politics of imagery, the social status of the artist and the challenge of photography. Only one major force struck me by its absence: physiognomy. For the nineteenth century came to believe as deeply in the correlation between outer and inner characteristics as the twentieth century came to believe in the reality of the unconscious. Manet's figure paintings present a special case of physiognomy beginning to doubt itself. Derived from writings attributed to Aristotle and promoted by the Swiss pop-star intellectual Johann Casper Lavater into a pseudo-science, physiognomy postulated a close relation between body and soul, between outward appearance and inner character. One can read a person's deepest qualities from facial features, head shape and gestures. For some people, physiognomic correspondences (lifted by Baudelaire into vast analogies between the material and the spiritual) filled the gap left by the decline of Christianity. It is not too difficult to discern how a belief in physiognomy could provide strong underpinnings for portraiture or character reading, for realism (or things as they are without idealization), and for caricature (or things revealing their inner being through imaginative exaggeration).

Manet never worked steadily at caricature. But he would have known the doctrine of physiognomy from Baudelaire and Champfleury. And his whole project of painting the world "sincerely," from the Paris types of *The Old Musician* to the formal portrait of Antonin Proust, testifies to an uneasy faith that appearances will reveal the true nature of the world around us and the people in it. The theatricality that preoccupies Fried refers back to a venerable belief in the clues and the codes of physiognomy, in how people declare themselves in their deportment. We have by no means put this pervasive doctrine behind us.

Like some people, I sometimes have difficulty recognizing an unfamiliar painting by Manet. *Le Port de Bordeaux* looks like early Mondrian. *Le Linge* must have been painted by one of the mainline Impressionists. Certainly *Le Bon Bock* and *The Execution of Maximilian* do not fit easily into the category "Manet." For the remarkable and troubling truth about this painter is that he didn't have a style to apply to whatever subject presented

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itself. He was essentially restless, in his life and in his art; and this restlessness puts one in mind of Dürer and Balanchine, two other great impatients who also clung to their heritage. We keep looking at Manet and re-evaluating his work not least because of this instability, this variety or unreliability of his style.

We return to him also because of his erratic relation to Impressionism, the only great popular school of modern painting. The impact of that style of painting on our notions of vision and our feelings for life may have been as great as that of stained glass windows in Gothic cathedrals on the people of their time. Impressionism lays before us a sumptuous outdoor paradise of leisure and luxury, even as it installs us in the bar and brothel scenes of Degas, which seem to describe a fall from paradise. Generally, Manet stayed away from both these tendencies of his contemporaries. He painted an indoor world of posed figures not exactly at ease in their existence.

But then, at the end of his life, he gave expression simultaneously to Paradise and the Fall. In its all-devouring horizontal mirror, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* shows us Paradise Glimpsed in the ultimate Parisian setting of gaiety and display. In front stands a figure from the Fall in the person of a fully clothed Venus: the bemused barmaid. Unlike the nude Victorine in *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe,* who looks boldly out at us, this human fixture casts her eyes just a bit down and off to one side, avoiding us. Standing between two worlds, dejected without being tragic, the barmaid resembles that other damsel of the mirror, Carroll's Alice, lost between reality and illusion. One recalls half-jokingly that Manet and Dodgson were born two weeks apart in January 1832. I say half-jokingly, since they both continue to haunt us with works that do not fit, or fit better than we know.

ROGER SHATTUCK is the author most recently of *Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography* (St. Martin's).

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 5*

should have stressed that laterborns are different from lastborns.

Sulloway's letter, as well as his book, reads as if there were one camp, scientists who defend reason, and another camp, humanists who are faddish. But calling yourself a scientist does not make you one: in its title, its examples and its detours into psychobabble—"How to Test Your Own Propensity to Rebel"—*Born to Rebel* leaves science far behind. Now, it seems, Sulloway wants to lump me in the camp of "anti-science," despite the fact that I said that "the best work done by social scientists tends to be strongly empirical, disconfirming what we thought to be true by marshalling impressive statistical evidence to the contrary." It is as if any criticism of Sulloway's interpretations of his data are taken by him as a criticism of the use of data. That strikes me as the kind of ideological thinking I saw in his book, which is why I concluded that, whatever else *Born to Rebel* may be, it is not science.

TRB *continued from page 6*

aware that this phone conference among the Republican leaders would take place. In another, the lawyer acknowledges that the Republicans have agreed as part of the plea bargain not to conspire to undermine the committee's case: "Newt will not orchestrate ... any attempt to spin this in such a way that it belies what he is admitting today in the statement of alleged violations." He echoes this sentiment twice later in the conversation.

But a reading of the transcript strongly suggests that these statements were spoken for form's sake. The conversation among Gingrich and his men has the air of the sort of chat a don might have with his capos if he thought that the lamp was listening: "Now, of course nobody would wanna do anything against the law here, but...." The game is given away, in fact, in the very next line after the lawyer's first careful notation of Newt's promise not to orchestrate counter-spin. The speaker is again the lawyer: "And so, now having said that, having served as a member [he is referring to his own six years as a Republican congressman from Arkansas], you know when documents become public, I as a member, am entitled to say whatever the hell I want to say about those public documents. *I guess that applies to any of you all who may be listening* [italics added]." Bethune then hastens to add another formulaic expression of adherence to the letter of the agreement: "But we want the record to be absolutely [inaudible] and clear here that Newt is not, nor does he desire for anybody in his [inaudible] to go out and try to help him."

And that out of the way, the Speaker, the lawyer and the high command go on to orchestrate that which they are so dutifully not orchestrating. They discuss the need to "not let a news cycle go by, not even let several hours go by." They talk about the desirability of handling the response so that it doesn't "look like it was part of some cooked operation." The lawyer suggests that Republicans hold their fire until after David Bonior, the leader of the anti-Gingrich forces in the House, speaks, since Bonior can be counted on to go too far, thus giving the Republicans a chance to appear before the press as aggrieved parties setting the record straight. Gingrich endorses the idea—"Ed's very clever"—and it is further planned, with clever Ed interrupting again to note that, of course, Gingrich cannot be party to any orchestration of spin. Of course.

At this writing, both sides are claiming the moral high ground. McDermott, who is awaiting word from the Justice Department about whether he will be prosecuted, has announced his resignation from the Ethics Committee on the grounds that "the ethics process in the House has been perverted into a partisan scheme." No!

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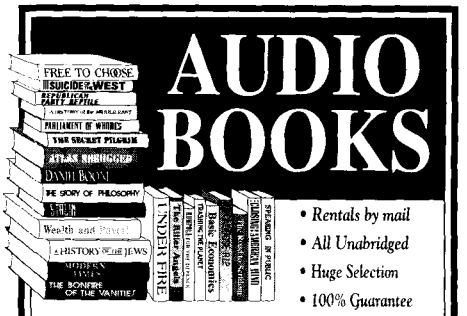

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Sick transit

I DON'T USUALLY ADMIT THIS when people ask me how I can live in Russia again after many years in the comfort of the U.S., but fortunately for me, there's one perk of the Soviet regime of which I can still take advantage. I live in my family's flat in Moscow's Writers Union building, where the apartments are bigger and prettier than most here and the residents know one another by their bylines. It's a cushioned existence in a harried, hostile city. Earlier this winter, though, I was rudely ejected from this insulated world, and into the Moscow health care system. A bout of pneumonia had left me with a tender, swollen throat and an Adam's apple the size of my fist. At the Writers Union clinic, the doctor grew agitated at the sight of me, sent me for an ultrasound, then ordered me to the hospital—thus consigning me to the tender mercies of health professionals who make $60 a month and aren't even paid that.

IN A MUSTY ROOM AT CITY HOSPITAL #67, a nurse showed me where I was to sleep that night: an old wooden examination bench, now made up like a bed. The bench was evidently broken in the middle, so a chair had been slid underneath to keep it from collapsing; the entire contraption rested at about a 110-degree angle to the wall. "We'll have a regular bed for you tomorrow," she said. "In that case, I'll come back tomorrow." I had to sign a form promising to return. At home I found a few faxed pages from a medical textbook, courtesy of a physician friend in the U.S. They told me that my condition, subacute thyroiditis, was a fairly ordinary complication that would go away by itself. Why, then, I returned to the hospital, I cannot say. Probably because I'd signed a form. Also because I have a weakness for institutional food. I had visions of velutinous mashed potatoes and soft white mystery fish. And a week or two of doing nothing but working on a translation I had to finish.

I'D THOUGHT MYSELF WELL-prepared since I'd brought my own mug and hot-water coil, but I soon learned they were not enough for survival here. At mealtimes, a kitchen employee rolled a gurney loaded with giant pots down the hall, and patients converged on it, bearing plates brought from home. One of my four roommates, a diabetic woman in her 40s, lent me a bowl and a spoon. Feeling every bit like Oliver Twist, I trotted out for my dollop of rotten cabbage and two-inch square of gristled brown meat. The meat resisted cutting, so my roommates tore at theirs with teeth and hands. I poked at my food for a minute before dumping it into the garbage. "When you get hungry, you'll like it," the owner of my bowl prophesied. They were a nice bunch, my roommates, but they did not let me work. They spent half the first day discussing ways to get the nurse to change the bedding they'd been lying on for over three weeks. They quieted down at night, but then I could not sleep because I was freezing—there was no heat despite the subzero weather. Of necessity, we kept the windows shut, so the room teemed with the day's smells. I lay awake listening as every news station on my Walkman broadcast half-hourly reports on President Yeltsin's health. His hospital was a fifteen-minute drive from mine. I thought all the obvious thoughts of privilege and the people, and I also thought that the journalists and the politicians and the entire country in airspace sounded profoundly tired of obsessing about the state of one man's organs.

DAYTIME WAS FOR TESTS. FIRST, THE ultrasound of my neck—the same procedure I'd had at the clinic the day before. Test results are never forwarded when a patient is hospitalized, though the cost of one ultrasound would probably pay for twenty decent hospital meals. Next was a lung and digestive-tract X-ray. I waited in a hall with twenty other patients, some of whom had difficulty standing up—but there was no place to sit. When my turn came, I discovered that the procedure was to have two patients wait by the X-ray machine while the third was X-rayed. Each got three times the necessary amount of radiation. "I'm not going to stand here getting radiated," I snapped at the nurse. "Come out and call my name when you are ready to take me alone." The nurse gave me a puzzled look and complied. I understood the look a few minutes later: it was her job to stand, completely unprotected, on the X-ray machine, feeding each subject her teaspoon of barium. Now the blood-chemistry tests. The nurse drew five vials of blood, labeled them carefully and handed me the tray: "Take the elevator to the basement and cross over to the next building, then down the hall—" "I'm not going," I said. "I'm sick, and I'm wearing pajamas. You go." "We don't carry blood. Patients do that," she retorted. I repeated my refusal. "Then I'm going to throw out your blood," she threatened. "Fine. There's more where that came from," I said, bluffing. I have low blood pressure, and hadn't eaten in a day, so losing another five vials of blood wasn't really an option.

MY DOCTOR, A VERY YOUNG WOMAN, haltingly reported my condition to the head of the endocrinology ward, a woman in her mid-30s. My X-rays were fine, my blood work (ah, she did not throw it out after all!) was alright, my neck seemed to be getting a bit better. The chief poked at my throat and nodded at my doctor significantly. "So I am prescribing it?" Her boss nodded. "Thirty?" Another nod. "Thirty what?" I attempted, awkwardly, to enter the conversation. "Later," my doctor responded mysteriously. Later, a nurse presented me with a handful of white pills. "What are these?" I asked. The nurse looked stumped. I demanded to see the bottle: prednisone, a hormonal drug that can cause stomach ulcers, "moon-face" and diabetes, among other complications. I was to take the drug for a couple of months—for a condition that is known to go away by itself. This was vintage Soviet medicine: it treated the disease ever so aggressively, making the patient sicker in the process, without even the illusion of informed consent.

EVERYBODY HAS HER BREAKING point. Mine was the shit. It appeared on our threshold on Thursday night, a thick rubber-sole imprint of human dung. There was an identical one in the women's bathroom, just below the unpunctuated sign, RESPECT THE CLEANING LADIES LABOR MAINTAIN CLEANLINESS. Some of the patients were in no condition to concern themselves with cleanliness, and someone had apparently not made it to a stall. It was still there in the morning, when a nurse slapped me awake: "Blood test time!" Two hours later I finally approached the duty nurse, who sat at a desk not five feet from our door, and asked her if she had noticed the shit. "It's the cleaning ladies' job!" she shouted. Someone placed a newspaper over the pile. Someone I suspected may have been a cleaning lady picked up the newspaper and deposited it in the trash. I got permission to go home for the weekend. The shit was there on Monday morning. On Tuesday I ran away. I don't take the doctor's calls. I figure she'll lose interest eventually. I think of this as the presidential strategy: put up with my sickness in seclusion long enough to wear them all out.

MASHA GESSEN

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Where We Stand

By Albert Shanker, President
American Federation of Teachers

A Large Wooden Horse?

We are used to seeing conservatives go all out in support of vouchers. But what about a conservative who argues *against* providing public money to send students to religious and other private schools? Timothy Lamer, whose op-ed piece, "A Conservative Case Against School Choice," recently appeared in the *Washington Post* (November 6, 1996), is such a novelty. Lamer thinks that conservatives who push for vouchers are ignoring or distorting their principles. He intends his article as a wake-up call to conservatives, but it should suggest to members of the public generally that there is something fishy about the conservative crusade for vouchers. How come conservatives are pushing something so alien to their usual point of view?

Conservatives who push for vouchers are disregarding some strongly held beliefs.

Here are some voucher arguments advanced by conservatives that go against the conservative grain:

■ *If Chelsea Clinton can....* Many conservatives are currently using an equity argument to push vouchers. They say that if Chelsea Clinton can choose a top private school, it is not fair to deny this opportunity to poor children. As Lamer points out, this is a remarkable departure from conservatives' usual position in regard to social inequities. How often have you heard conservatives saying that poor children should have access to the same kind of medical care as their own kids? In fact, conservatives are generally quite comfortable with the idea that some Americans have more and better choices than others: "Inequality is a fact of life." Furthermore, they generally believe that, when governments attempt to even things out, "they end up harming everyone." What happens to this suspicion of government when it comes to vouchers? Why aren't conservatives worried that "vouchers [could] harm private schools instead of helping public schools?"

■ *Other "civilized" countries do it....* Conservatives argue that other countries finance the education of students in religious schools, so why don't we? But if they argue this, why don't they also urge that we raise taxes here? After all, people in these other countries are taxed at much higher rates. And why aren't they agitating for state-run health care and a centralized education system employing unionized teachers—just like these other countries have? Lamer says the "other countries" argument is a surprise because conservatives are not given to holding up the practice of other nations as examples. Their position is that we are successful precisely *because* our government does not engage in this kind of meddling. Why, he wonders, are conservatives making an exception with vouchers?

■ *If Pell grants are OK....* Conservatives ask why, if Pell grants give public money to college students who attend private and religious colleges, we can't give vouchers to K-12 students. Lamer is amazed at this argument. He points out that conservatives rail constantly against entitlement programs—like Pell grants. They complain that these programs grow every year and are nearly impossible to cut without paying a "stiff political price." So why introduce another such program? Comparing vouchers with Pell grants also raises, for Lamer, the specter of government regulation. Why aren't conservatives worried that vouchers will lead to government regulation of private schools?

■ *They have a constitutional right....* There are even conservatives who say that poor people cannot freely exercise their religion unless they can send their children to religious schools—hence the need for vouchers. Why then don't these conservatives insist that the government provide money for printing presses—so poor people can exercise their freedom of the press? Conservatives agree, along with everybody else, that "poor people have the right to freely exercise their religion," but, Lamer says, it is totally out of character to find them insisting that poor people "have the right to do it with other people's money."

What's going on here? As Lamer points out, conservatives who campaign for vouchers are disregarding some strongly held beliefs. They are working hard to increase government involvement in education when that is something they usually condemn. Why aren't they nervous about what might happen to private schools when the government steps in to see how public money is being spent there?

Some conservatives would undoubtedly answer that they are pushing vouchers out of a concern for the well-being of poor children. But can we take this seriously? Conservatives have always opposed legislation as a remedy for social inequities. And if this concern for poor children is so powerful that it leads them to ignore one of their basic principles, why do they continue to oppose legislative remedies in other areas where painful inequities exist— like housing and health care?

Maybe there is a simpler answer to the conservative turnabout on vouchers that Lamer finds so perplexing. Perhaps vouchers are really a stalking horse for some other long-term plan—like replacing public education with a private system in which parents would bear most of the cost of educating their children. Lamer does not speculate about motives, but the rest of us might recall an old story about the Greeks, who offered an unexpectedly handsome and generous gift to the Trojans—a large wooden horse.

Mr. Shanker's comments appear under the auspices of the American Federation of Teachers. Reader correspondence is invited. Address Mr. Shanker at AFT, 555 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001. © 1997 by Albert Shanker. Visit the AFT web site (http://www.aft.org).

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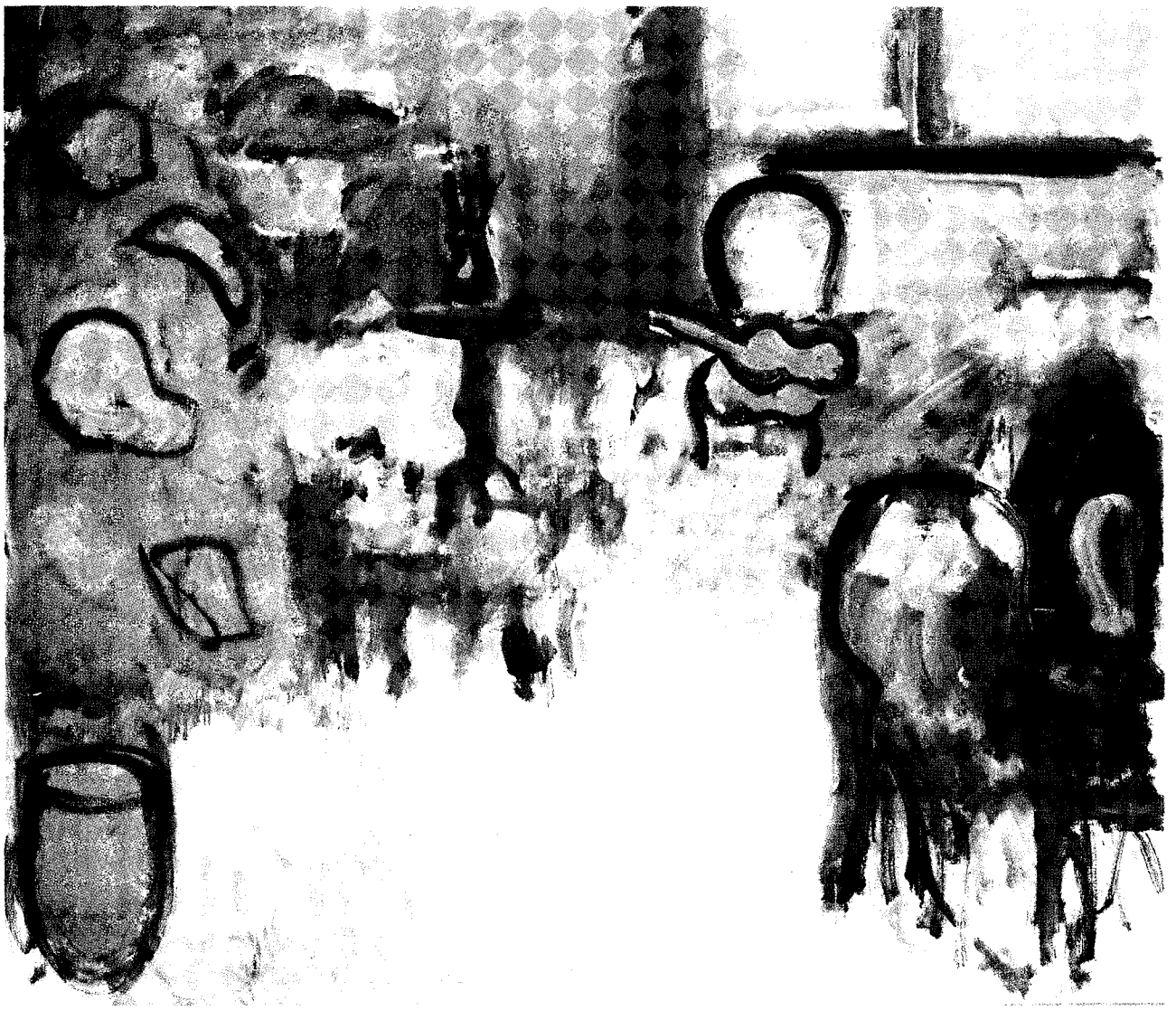

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